

# Letters

Pliny (the  
Younger.),  
Winifred ...



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## PLINY

### LETTERS

#### I

*Alexander Ziwex*

Plinius Caecilius Secundus, c.

**PLINY**

**LETTERS**

**WITH AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY  
WILLIAM MELMOTH**

**REVISED BY  
W. M. L. HUTCHINSON**

**IN TWO VOLUMES**

**I**



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## PREFACE

MELMOTH's translation of Pliny's *Letters*, published in 1746, not only delighted contemporary critics—amongst whom Warton pronounced it a better work than the original—but deservedly ranks as a minor English classic. Apart from its literary excellence, it has the supreme merit of reflecting the spirit of the original, and that to a degree now unattainable. For it was produced when the lost art of letter-writing was in its heyday, and to compose just such letters as Pliny's the universal accomplishment of well-bred persons. His high-flown compliments, his neatly-turned platitudes, his nice blending of sense and sensibility, were stock ingredients of eighteenth century correspondence; and Melmoth—himself author of a vastly admired series of imaginary letters—had the ideal style for translating him at his fingers' ends. No modern rendering can recapture the ease and felicity of Melmoth's; for they came of his living in a world so like Pliny's own that he was perfectly at home with his author's mode of thought.

## PREFACE

On the other hand, Melmoth carried too far the principle that the letter killeth but the spirit giveth life. Judged even by the easy canons of his time in regard to translation, his work is extraordinarily loose and inaccurate; a good deal of it is simply paraphrase, and in many places the sense is flagrantly wrong. Thorough revision was necessary if it was to be included in the Loeb Classical Library; it was further needful to compress it considerably before it could be placed side by side with the text, as Melmoth's fondness for amplifying often makes the English twice as long as the Latin. To put new cloth to an old garment is always a hazardous undertaking, and the best I can hope is that my patches, though extensive, are sufficiently in harmony with the original fabric to escape notice.

The text of the present edition is based upon that published by the Bipons Press<sup>1</sup> in 1789, which

<sup>1</sup> The celebrated Bipons editions of the classics were issued by three masters of the Gymnasium at Zweibrücken in the Rhenish Palatinate from 1779 to 1807, when after many vicissitudes in the revolutionary wars their Press was finally closed. The editor of its last production, an edition of *Quintus Smyrnaeus* (1807), says in his preface, "Who could occupy himself with a Greek poet at a time when all our minds are being stirred by mighty events and political changes? The work of the Bipons Press . . . has been interrupted by War."

## PREFACE

seems approximately the same as Melmoth's; it has been revised throughout with the help of the following modern editions: Keil, 1853 and 1873; C. F. W. Mueller (Teubner), 1903; Merrill (Selections), 1903; Kukula (Teubner), 1908; and for Book X., Hardy, 1889. Textual criticism, which in Pliny's case is highly difficult and uncertain, does not come within the scope of this edition; I have merely given some of the more important variant readings, citing the source of each. For the explanatory notes I am largely indebted to Merrill and Hardy, and have also consulted Church and Brodribb's "Selections" (1880).

W. M. L. HUTCHINSON.

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# INTRODUCTION

## PLINY'S LIFE

PLINY THE YOUNGER—commonly so called in distinction from his maternal uncle, the author of the *Natural History*—was born at Novum Comum (Como) in 61 or 62 A.D. Both his father's family, the Caecilii, and his mother's, the Plinii, belonged to the provincial nobility; both were wealthy and of good repute. Losing his father in childhood, Pliny was left to the guardianship of the celebrated Verginius Rufus; he received an elaborate education, completed at Rome, where he studied rhetoric under Quintilian, and doubtless supervised by his learned uncle. On the latter's death in 79 A.D. he left his nephew his sole heir, adopting him by will; Pliny, according to custom, took his adoptive father's name, and was thenceforth known as C. Plinius Caecilius Secundus.<sup>1</sup> In the same year, at the age of eighteen,

<sup>1</sup> The elder Pliny's name was C. Plinius Secundus. The nephew's original name was P. Caecilius Secundus; Publius being *praenomen*, Caecilius *gentilicium* (name of his gens), Secundus *cognomen*. His *cognomen*, being identical with his uncle's, remained unchanged; and he kept his original *gentilicium* in addition to that of his uncle (Plinius), whereas by older usage he would have added it as a second *cognomen* in the form Caecilianus.

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he made his first appearance at the bar ; he became one of the most eminent pleaders of his day, and passed through the regular stages of an official career up to the consulship, to which he was nominated by Trajan in 100 A.D. The successful tenor of his public life remained unbroken throughout Domitian's reign of terror ; and though he afterwards believed himself to have been in imminent danger from that Emperor, as the friend of his victims Helvidius, Rusticus, and Senecio, there is evidence that he enjoyed, and none that he ever forfeited, his favour.<sup>1</sup> From what we know of Pliny's character, as revealed in his *Letters*, we may infer that he played a prudent, though not dishonourable, part in those troublous times ; that he concealed his sympathy with the objects of Domitian's persecution so long as to avow it was simply to share their fate ; and that when Domitian's death and Nerva's accession (96 A.D.) had "restored liberty," he indulged a harmless vanity by posing as one who had narrowly escaped martyrdom under the late tyrant. On the other hand, though Pliny was no hero, we need not conclude him to have been a coward ; if he avoided offending Domitian, Agricola himself did the same ; and if he saved his life by discretion, he would

<sup>1</sup> He became quaestor 89 A.D. as Domitian's personal nominee ; praetor 93 A.D., by his special grace, without waiting the usual year after holding the tribunate ; and was by him appointed prefect of the military treasury, 94 or 95 A.D.



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assuredly have lost it rather than stoop to actual baseness.

Pliny's worth and talent for affairs were recognized both by Nerva and his successor, Trajan. The former, at the close of his short reign, made him prefect of the Treasury of Saturn—apparently the only instance of this important post being given to a man who had held the prefecture of the Military Treasury. From Trajan he received the consulship (100 A.D.) and, some three years later, the coveted office of augur; these were virtual sinecures, but about 105 A.D. he was given the “curatorship of the bed and banks of the Tiber and of the city sewers”—a post no less laborious than honourable, and demanding much administrative ability. This was the last public office held by Pliny at Rome; a still higher one awaited him in a distant province, from which he was not destined to return.

The province of Bithynia had been placed by Augustus among the “senatorial” provinces, *i.e.* those administered by the Senate through proconsuls chosen by lot from the ranks of that body. But whether owing to local conditions or proconsular mismanagement, this administration had been a failure in Bithynia; political disturbances were rife, and the finances of its cities disorganized. Trajan resolved to take the province under his own control for a time, and he sent Pliny thither as his legate, with full powers to reform abuses and re-organize

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the finances of the cities. It was probably in 111 A.D. that Pliny went upon this mission. How he executed it we learn in detail from his correspondence with Trajan, which gives us an interesting picture of Roman provincial administration at its best. Pliny's appointment seems to have lasted about two years, and to have been terminated by his death; but this remains matter of inference. For with his last letter to Trajan from Bithynia, in which he speaks of having sent his wife home to Italy, we lose all trace of him; the great inscription erected to his memory at Comum shows that he held no further office, and that he died before 115 A.D.,<sup>1</sup> but the rest is silence.

Pliny was thrice married, but left no children. Nothing is known of his first wife<sup>2</sup>; his second, the daughter of Pompeia Celerina, died about 97 A.D.; some years later he married Calpurnia, granddaughter of his fellow-townsmen Calpurnius Fabatus. From his letters to her, and to her relatives, we see that Pliny was a devoted husband, and his young wife a pattern of the domestic virtues.

<sup>1</sup> This is safely inferred from the fact that Trajan is not given the official title of "Parthicus," which he assumed in that year.

<sup>2</sup> It appears from i. 18 that he married her when "still a youth" and just entering practice at the bar.

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## THE LETTERS

Excepting the tenth and last Book, containing his official correspondence with Trajan, Pliny's Letters were not only published by himself but composed with an eye to publication. Hence the artificiality and lack of the vivid personal touch which at once strike us when we compare them with those of Cicero, whom he wished to emulate in letter-writing as in oratory. The difference is not merely the inevitable one between a man of genius writing in most stirring times and a man of mediocre talents writing in rather dull ones; it is far more the difference between a "human document" and a literary composition. In other words, Cicero's are real letters, in which he "unlocked his heart" to his friends and discussed all the news of the day; Pliny's are graceful prose exercises on various subjects and occasions. Incidentally, however, they give us much interesting detail respecting Roman life and manners in his time; valuable notices of contemporaries such as Martial and Silius Italicus; and an undesigned revelation of his own character, which, in spite of priggishness, vanity, and want of humour, has not only respectable but amiable traits.

The chronology of the first nine Books, none of these letters being dated, has been much disputed. It seems probable on the whole that Pliny published

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them in three groups (I.-II., III.-VI., VII.-IX.), issuing the first group in 97 or 98 A.D., and the last in 108 or 109. The tenth Book must have been published after his death, by some person unknown.

### SOURCES OF THE TEXT

For the first nine Books, we have three distinct sources, viz. (a) MSS. containing Books I.-V., of which the best are R (Florentinus Ashburnhamensis R. 98 olim Riccardianus), tenth century, F (Laurentianus S. Marci 284), tenth-eleventh century; (b) MSS. containing Books I.-VII. and IX., all of the fifteenth century, of which D (Dresdensis D. 166) is representative; (c) MSS. containing nine books, of which the best is M (Laurentianus 47. 36). V (Vaticanus 3864) is closely akin to M, but contains only Books I.-IV. The text of Book X. depends on a lost MS. which contained also the first nine Books. While this was still extant at Paris, copies of it by different hands were used by Avantius of Verona for his edition of 1502, and by Aldus in 1508. But while the Aldine edition gave the tenth Book entire, the first forty Letters are for some reason missing in that of Avantius. A MS. of these Letters has been discovered by Hardy in the Bodleian Library, which appears to be the actual copy from which Aldus printed.

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THE LETTERS OF PLINY

BOOK I

VOL. I

B

# C. PLINII CAECILII SECUNDI EPISTULARUM

## LIBER PRIMUS

### I

C. PLINIUS SECUNDUS SEPTICIO SUO S. *see Index*

FREQUENTER hortatus es, ut epistulas, si quas paulo accuratius scripsissem, colligerem publicaremque. Collegi non servato temporis ordine (neque enim historiam componebam), sed ut quaeque in manus venerat. Superest, ut nec te consilii, nec me paeniteat obsequii. Ita enim fiet, ut eas, quae adhuc neglectae iacent, requiram, et, si quas addidero, non supprimam. Vale.

### II

C. PLINIUS ARRIANO SUO S.

QUIA tardiolem adventum tuum prospicio, librum, quem prioribus epistulis promiseram, exhibeo. Hunc rogo ex consuetudine tua et legas et emendes, eo

# THE LETTERS OF PLINY

## BOOK I

### I

#### TO SEPTICIUS

YOU have frequently pressed me to make a select collection of my Letters (if there be any which show some literary finish) and give them to the public. I have accordingly done so ; not indeed in their proper order of time, for I was not compiling a history ; but just as they presented themselves to my hands. And now what remains but to wish that neither you may have occasion to repent of your advice, nor I of my compliance ? if so, I may probably inquire after the rest, which at present lie neglected, and not withhold those I shall hereafter write. Farewell.

### II

#### TO ARRIANUS

I FORESEE your journey hither is likely to be delayed, and therefore produce a copy of the speech which I promised in my former letter, begging you would, as usual, revise and correct it. I desire this the more

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

magis, quod nihil ante peraeque eodem ζήλω scripsisse videor. Temptavi enim imitari Demosthenem semper tuum, Calvum nuper meum, dumtaxat figuris orationis; nam vim tantorum virorum 'pauci, quos aequus amavit,' adsequi possunt. Nec materia ipsa huic (vereor, ne improbe dicam) aemulationi repugnavit; erat enim prope tota in contentione dicendi; quod me longae desidiaie indormientem excitavit, si modo is sum ego, qui excitari possim. Non tamen omnino Marci nostri ληκύθους fugimus, quotiens paululum itinere decedere non intempestivis amoenitatibus admonebamur. Acres enim esse, non tristes, volebamus. Nec est, quod putes me sub hac exceptione veniam postulare. Immo, quo magis intendam limam tuam, confitebor et ipsum me et contubernales ab editione non abhorrrere, si modo tu fortasse errori nostro album calculum adieceris. Est enim plane aliquid edendum, atque utinam hoc potissimum, quod paratum est! (audis desidiaie votum?) edendum autem ex pluribus causis, maxime quod libelli, quos exsimus, dicuntur in manibus esse, quamvis iam gratiam novitatis exuerint; nisi tamen auribus nostris bibliopolae blandiuntur. Sed sane blandiantur, dum per hoc mendacium nobis studia nostra commendent. Vale.

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<sup>a</sup> *Aen.* vi. 129.

<sup>b</sup> ληκύθοι, lit. "toilet-bottles," in which ladies kept their cosmetics. The derived meaning, "tropes," "flowers of rhetoric," occurs in a letter of Cicero's (*Att.* i. 14. 3), from which Pliny may have quoted the word.



## BOOK I. ii

earnestly, as I was never, I think, animated with the same warmth of zeal in any of my former compositions ; for I have endeavoured to imitate your old favourite Demosthenes, and Calvus who is lately become mine. When I say so, I mean only with respect to their *manner* ; for to catch their sublime *spirit*, is given alone to “the choice selected few, whom fav’ring Jove befriends.”<sup>a</sup> My subject indeed seemed naturally to lead me to this (may I venture to call it?) emulation, since it was, in general, of such a nature as demanded controversial eloquence, even to a degree sufficient to have awakened (if in truth it is possible to awake) that indolence in which I have long reposed. I have not however neglected the softer graces<sup>b</sup> of my favourite Tully, wherever I could with propriety step out of my direct road to enjoy a more flowery path : for it was vigour, not austerity, at which I aimed. I would not have you imagine that I am bespeaking your indulgence, by filing this counter-plea : on the contrary, to induce you to exercise the utmost severity of your criticism, I will confess, that neither my familiars nor myself are averse to the publication of this piece if *you* should give your vote in favour of what may be pure error on my part. The truth is, as I must publish something, I wish (do you catch the true sluggard’s petition?) it might be this performance rather than any other, merely because it is already finished. At all events, however, something I must publish, and for many reasons ; chiefly, because the speeches which I have already sent into the world, though they have long since lost all their recommendation from novelty, are still, I am told, in request ; if, after all, the Booksellers do not flatter me. And let ’em, since by that deception I am encouraged to pursue my studies. Farewell.

# THE LETTERS OF <sup>P.</sup>LINNY

## III

C. PLINIUS CANINIO RUFO SUO S.

QUID agit Comum, tuae meaeque deliciae? quid suburbanum amoenissimum? quid illa porticus verna semper? quid platanon opacissimus? quid euripus viridis et gemmeus? quid subiectus et serviens lacus? quid illa mollis et tamen solida gestatio? quid balineum illud, quod plurimus sol implet et circumit? quid triclinia illa popularia, illa paucorum? quid cubicula diurna, nocturna? Possidentne te, et per vices partuntur? an, ut solebas, intentione rei familiaris obeundae crebris excursionibus avocaris? Si te possident, felix beatusque es; si minus, unus ex multis. Quin tu (tempus est enim) humiles et sordidas curas aliis mandas et ipse te in alto isto pinguique secessu studiis adseris? Hoc sit negotium tuum, hoc otium, hic labor, haec quies, in his vigilia, in his etiam somnus reponatur. Effinge aliquid et excude, quod sit perpetuo tuum. Nam reliqua rerum tuarum post te alium atque alium dominum sortientur: hoc nunquam tuum desinet esse, si semel coeperit. Scio, quem animum, quod horter ingenium; tu modo enitere, ut tibi ipse sis tanti, quanti videberis aliis, si tibi fueris. Vale.

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<sup>a</sup> Pliny's native town, the modern Como, on the shore of the Lacus Larius (now Lago di Como).

## BOOK I. iii

### III

#### TO CANINIUS RUFUS

How stands Comum,<sup>a</sup> that favourite scene of yours and mine? What becomes of the pleasant Villa, the ever vernal Portico, the shady Planetree-grove, the crystal Canal so agreeably winding along its flowery banks, together with the charming Lake below, that serves at once the purposes of use and beauty? What have you to tell me of the firm yet springy Allée, the Bath exposed on all sides to full sunshine, the public Saloon, the private Dining room, and all the elegant apartments for repose both at noon and night? Do these enjoy my friend, and divide his time with pleasing vicissitude? Or does the attentive management of your property, as usual, call you frequently out from this agreeable retreat? if the scene of your enjoyments lies wholly there, you are thrice happy: if not, you are levelled with the common order of mankind. But leave, my friend (for it is high time), the low and sordid pursuits of life to others, and in this safe and snug retreat, emancipate yourself for your studies. Let these employ your idle as well as busy hours; let them be at once your toil and your amusement, the subjects of your waking and even sleeping thoughts: shape and fashion something that shall be really and for ever your own. All your other possessions will pass on from one master to another: *this* alone, when once it is yours, will for ever be so. As well I know the temper and genius of him whom I am exhorting, I bid you strive to do justice to your talents; no more is needed, for the world to do the same. Farewell.

# THE LETTERS OF PLINY

## IV

C. PLINIUS POMPEIAE CELERINAE SOCRUI S.

QUANTUM copiarum in Ocriculano, in Narniensi, in Carsulano, in Perusino tuo ! in Narniensi vero etiam balineum, ex epistulis meis (nam iam tuis opus non est) una illa brevis et vetus sufficit. Non mehercule tam mea sunt, quae mea sunt, quam quae tua ; hoc tamen differunt, quod sollicitius et intentius tui me quam mei excipiunt. Idem fortasse eveniet tibi, si quando in nostra deverteris. Quod velim facias, primum ut perinde nostris rebus ac nos tuis perfruaris, deinde ut mei expergiscantur aliquando, qui me secure ac prope negligenter expectant. Nam mitium dominorum apud servos ipsa consuetudine metus exolecit ; novitatibus excitantur probarique dominis per alios magis quam per ipsos laborant. Vale.

## V

C. PLINIUS VOCONIO ROMANO SUO S.

VIDISTINE quemquam Marco Regulo timidiorem, humiliorem post Domitiani mortem ? sub quo non

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<sup>a</sup> Mother of Pliny's wife.

## BOOK I. iv.-v

### IV

#### TO POMPEIA CELERINA <sup>a</sup>

You might perceive by my last short letter of some time ago, that I had no occasion of *yours* to inform me of the various conveniences you enjoy at your several villas. The elegant accommodations which are to be found at Narnia, Ocriculum, Carsola, Perusia, particularly the pretty bath at Narnia, I am extremely well acquainted with. For the truth is, I am more the master in your houses than I am in my own, and I know of no other difference between them, than that I am more carefully attended in the former than the latter. You may, perhaps, have occasion to make the same observation in your turn, whenever you shall give me your company here; which I wish for, not only that you may partake of *mine* with the same ease and freedom that I do *yours*, but to awaken the industry of my domestics, who are grown something careless in their attendance upon me. A long course of mild treatment is apt to wear out the impressions of awe in servants; whereas new faces quicken their diligence, as they are generally more inclined to please their master by attention to his guests, than to himself. Farewell.

### V

#### TO VOCONIUS ROMANUS

DID you ever see a more abject and mean-spirited creature than Regulus has appeared since the death of Domitian, during whose reign his conduct was no

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minora flagitia commiserat quam sub Nerone, sed tectiora. Coepit vereri, ne sibi irascerer; nec falleretur; irascebar. Rustici Aruleni periculum foverat, exsultaverat morte, adeo ut librum recitaret publicaretque, in quo Rusticum insectatur atque etiam 'Stoicorum simiam' appellat; adicit 'Vitellianae cicatrice stigmosum.' Agnoscis eloquentiam Reguli. Lacerat Herennium Senecionem tam intemperanter quidem, ut dixerit ei Mettius Carus 'Quid tibi cum meis mortuis? numquid ego aut Crasso aut Camerino molestus sum?' quos ille sub Nerone accusaverat. Haec me Regulus dolenter tulisse credebat ideoque etiam cum recitaret librum, non adhibuerat. Praeterea reminiscebatur, quam capitaliter ipsum me apud centumviros laccessisset. Aderam Areionillae, Timonis uxori, rogatu Aruleni Rustici; Regulus contra. Nitebamur nos in parte causae sententia Metti Modesti, optimi viri. Is tunc in exilio erat, a Domitiano relegatus. Ecce tibi Regulus: 'Quaero,' inquit, 'Secunde, quid de Modesto sentias.' Vides, quod periculum, si respondissem 'bene,' quod flagitium, si 'male.' Non possum dicere aliud tunc mihi quam deos adfuisse. 'Respondebo,' inquam, 'quid sentiam,

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<sup>a</sup> *i.e.* of the wound inflicted by one of Vespasian's soldiers, who, it is implied, treated Rusticus as a partisan of Vitellius. See Biogr. Index.

<sup>b</sup> The Centumviral court, originally composed of three citizens from each of the thirty-five tribes, dealt with civil cases relating to ownership, kinship, and inheritance. By Pliny's time it had been enlarged to 180 members, divided into four panels which sat separately for common cases, but as a single court for specially important ones (i. 18, vi. 33). It sat in the Basilica Julia (ii. 14).

## BOOK I. v

less infamous, though more concealed than under Nero's? He has lately entertained some apprehensions of my resentment: they were justly founded; resentment was what I felt. He not only promoted the prosecution against Rusticus Arulenus, but exulted in his death; insomuch that he actually recited and published a libel upon his memory, wherein he styles him, "the Stoics' ape": and further, "one branded with the scar<sup>a</sup> that stamped him a Vitellian." There you recognize his style of oratory. He falls so furiously in this piece, upon the character of Herennius Senecio, that Mettius Carus said to him one day: "Pray what business have you with my dead men? Did I ever interfere in the affair of Crassus, or Camerinus?" These, you know, were victims to Regulus in Nero's time. For these reasons he imagines I am highly exasperated, and therefore even when he recited the piece, did not give me an invitation. Besides he has not forgot, it seems, the dangerous assault he once made upon me, when he and I were pleading before the Centumviri.<sup>b</sup> Rusticus had desired me to be counsel for Arionilla, Timon's wife: Regulus was engaged against her. In the course of my defence I strongly insisted upon a ruling which had been formerly given by the worthy Modestus, at that time banished by Domitian. Now you shall see Regulus in his true colours: "Pray," says he, "what are your sentiments of Modestus?" You will easily judge how extremely hazardous it would have been to have answered in his favour, and how infamous if I had done otherwise. But some guardian power, I cannot but affirm, assisted me in this emergency. "I would tell you my sentiments," said I, "if that

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si de hoc centumviri iudicaturi sunt.' Rursus ille : 'Quaero, quid de Modesto sentias.' Iterum ego, 'Solebant testes in reos, non in damnatos interrogari.' Tertio ille : 'Non iam, quid de Modesto, sed quid de pietate Modesti sentias.' 'Quaeris,' inquam, 'quid sentiam ; at ego ne interrogare quidem fas puto de quo pronuntiatum est.' Conticuit ; me laus et gratulatio secuta est, quod nec famam meam aliquo responso utili fortasse, inhonesto tamen, laeseram nec me laqueis tam insidiosae interrogationis involveram. Nunc ergo conscientia exteritus apprehendit Caecilium Celerem, mox Fabium Iustum, rogat, ut me sibi reconcilient, nec contentus pervenit ad Spurinnam ; huic suppliciter (ut est, cum timet, abiectissimus) 'Rogo,' inquit, 'mane videas Plinium domi : sed plane mane (neque enim diutius ferre sollicitudinem possum), et quoquo modo efficias, ne mihi irascatur.' Evigilaveram. Nuntius a Spurinna, 'Venio ad te.' 'Immo ego ad te.' Coimus in porticum Liviae, cum alter ad alterum tenderemus. Exponit Reguli mandata ; addit preces suas, ut dece-

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" To say that Modestus was loyal, might have been construed as treason to Domitian, who had condemned him. Pliny turns the tables upon Regulus by suggesting that even to put a question on a *chose jugée* was disloyal to the Emperor. (Merrill.)



## BOOK I. v

were a matter for the consideration of the Centumviri." Still he repeated his Question. I replied, "It had been customary to examine witnesses to the character of *accused* but not of *condemned* persons." He pressed me a third time: "I do not inquire," said he, "what you think of Modestus in general, I only ask your opinion of his Loyalty." Since you will have my sentiments then, I returned, "I think it illegal even to ask a question concerning a person who stands convicted." This silenced him; and I was universally applauded and congratulated, that, without wounding my character by an expedient, perhaps, though ~~dis~~ingenuous answer, I had avoided to entangle myself in so insidious a snare.<sup>a</sup> So now, alarmed by the consciousness of this offence, Regulus seizes first upon Caecilius Celer, then on Fabius Justus, and begs they would use their interest to bring about a reconciliation between us. And lest this should not be sufficient, he has applied also to Spurrinna for the same purpose; to whom he came in the humblest manner (for he is the most abject creature living, where he has any thing to fear) and says he—"I beg you will call upon Pliny to-morrow morning, and endeavour by any means to soften his resentment, but be sure to go *early* in the morning, for I can no longer support myself under this anxiety of mind." I had just awakened the following day when there came a message from Spurrinna, informing me that he would wait upon me. I sent word back, I would call upon him; however, both of us setting out to pay this visit, we met under Livia's Portico. He acquainted me with the commission he had received from Regulus, and interceded for him, as became so worthy a man in behalf of one of a very

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bat optimum virum pro dissimillimo, parce. Cui ego, 'Dispiciēs ipse, quid renuntiandum Regulo putes. Te decipi a me non oportet. Exspecto Mauricum,' (non-dum enim ab exsilio venerat) 'ideo nihil alterutram in partem respondere tibi possum facturus, quidquid ille decreverit; illum enim esse huius consilii ducem, me comitem decet.' Paucos post dies ipse me Regulus convenit in praetoris officio; illuc persecutus secretum petit; ait timere se, ne animo meo penitus haereret, quod in centumvirali iudicio aliquando dixisset, cum responderet mihi et Satrio Rufo: 'Satrius Rufus, cui non est cum Cicerone aemulatio, et qui contentus est eloquentia saeculi nostri.' Respondi nunc me intelligere maligne dictum, quia ipse confiteretur; ceterum potuisse honorificum existimari. 'Est enim,' inquam, 'mihi cum Cicerone aemulatio, nec sum contentus eloquentia saeculi nostri. Nam stultissimum credo, ad imitandum non optima quaeque proponere. Sed tu, qui huius iudicii meministi, cur illius oblitus es, in quo me interrogasti, quid de Metti Modesti pietate sentirem?' Expalluit notabiliter, quamvis palleat semper, et haesitabundus: 'Interrogavi non ut tibi nocerem, sed ut Modesto.' Vide hominis crudelitatem, qui se non dissimulet exsuli nocere voluisse. Subiunxit

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<sup>a</sup> Brother to Arulenus Rusticus.

## BOOK I. v

different character, without greatly pressing the thing. I ought not, I told him, to conceal the true state of the case from him, and after I had informed him of that, I would leave it to himself to consider what answer was proper for me to return. "I cannot positively," said I, "determine any thing till Mauricus<sup>a</sup> (who was then in exile) shall return, by whose sentiments I think myself obliged to be entirely guided in this affair." A few days after Regulus met me at the installation of the Praetor; following me at heel, he asks for a private conference, and says he was afraid I deeply resented an expression he had once made use of in his reply to me and Satrius Rufus, before the Centumviri, to this purpose: "Satrius Rufus, who does not affect to rival Tully, and contents himself with the eloquence of our age." I answered, that now indeed I perceived he spoke it with a sneer, since he owned he meant it so; otherwise it might have passed for a compliment. "I am free to own," I said, "that I do endeavour to emulate Cicero, and am by no means contented with taking my example from modern eloquence; for I look upon it as a very absurd thing not to copy the best models of every kind. But how happens it," continued I, "that you who remember so well what passed at this trial, should have forgot that other, when you pushed me so strongly concerning the loyalty of Modestus?" Pale as he always is, he turned still more remarkably so, and after a good deal of hesitation, he said, "It was not you whom I designed the question to injure, it was only Modestus." Observe now, I beseech you, the implacable spirit of this fellow, who makes no concealment of having designed to injure an exile. But the reason he subjoined is

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

egregiam causam. ‘Scripsit,’ inquit, ‘in epistula quadam, quae apud Domitianum recitata est, “Regulus omnium bipedum nequissimus”’; quod quidem Modestus verissime scripserat. Hic fere nobis sermonis terminus; neque enim volui progredi longius, ut mihi omnia libera servarem, dum Mauricus venit, nec me praeterit, esse Regulum *δυσκαθαίρετον*; est enim locuples, factiosus, curatur a multis, timetur a pluribus, quod plerumque fortius amore est. Potest tamen fieri, ut haec concussa labantur; nam gratia malorum tam infida est quam ipsi. Verum, ut idem saepius dicam, exspecto Mauricum. Vir est gravis, prudens, multis experimentis eruditus, et qui futura possit ex praeteritis providere. Mihi et temptandi aliquid et quiescendi illo auctore ratio constabit. Haec tibi scripsi, quia aequum erat te pro amore mutuo non solum omnia mea facta dictaque, verum etiam consilia cognoscere. Vale.

## VI

C. PLINIUS CORNELIO TACITO SUO S.

RIDEBIS, et licet rideas. Ego ille, quem nosti, apros tres et quidem pulcherrimos, cepi. ‘Ipse?’ in-

## BOOK I. v.-vi

pleasant. "He had wrote," said he, "in a letter, which was read to Domitian, 'Regulus, the greatest scoundrel that walks on two legs.'" And Modestus could have written nothing truer. Here, or hereabouts, our conversation ended; I not wishing to continue it, and being desirous to reserve to myself the liberty of acting as I should see proper when Mauricus returns. It is no easy matter, I well know, to overthrow Regulus; he is rich, and at the head of a party; there are many with whom he has credit, and more that are afraid of him; a sentiment that is often more powerful than love. But after all, ties of this sort are not so strong, but they may be loosened; for the popularity of a bad man is no more to be depended upon than he is himself. However (to repeat it again), I shall do nothing in this affair till Mauricus returns. He is a man of solid worth and great sagacity, formed upon a long course of experience, and who, from his observations on the past, well knows how to foresee the future. With him for adviser, I shall be able to present good and sufficient reason for either pursuing or dropping this affair. In the meanwhile, I thought I owed this account to the friendship that subsists between us, which gives you an undoubted right to be informed not only of all my sayings and doings, but all my designs. Farewell.

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### VI

TO CORNELIUS TACITUS

CERTAINLY you will laugh (and laugh you may) when I tell you that your old acquaintance is turned sportsman, and has taken three noble boars. What!

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## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

quis? Ipse; non tamen ut omnino ab inertia mea et quiete discederem. Ad retia sedebam; erat in proximo non venabulum aut lancea, sed stilus et pugillares; meditabar aliquid enotabamque, ut, si manus vacuas, plenas tamen ceras reportarem. Non est, quod contemnas hoc studendi genus; mirum est, ut animus agitatione motuque corporis excite-  
tur; iam undique silvae et solitudo ipsumque illud silentium, quod venationi datur, magna cogitationis incitamenta sunt. Proinde, cum venabere, licebit auctore me ut panarium et lagunculam sic etiam pugillares feras; experieris non Dianam magis montibus quam Minervam inerrare. Vale.

### VII

C. PLINIUS OCTAVIO RUFO SUO S.

VIDE, in quo me fastigio collocaris, cum mihi idem potestatis idemque regni dederis quod Homerus Iovi Optimo Maximo:

Τῷ δ' ἕτερον μὲν ἔδωκε πατήρ, ἕτερον δ' ἀνένευσεν.<sup>1</sup>

Nam ego quoque simili nutu ac renutu respondere voto tuo possum. Etenim, sicut fas est mihi, prae-  
sertim te exigente, excusare Baeticis contra unum

<sup>1</sup> Il. xvi. 250.

## BOOK I. vi.—vii

(methinks I hear you say with astonishment) Pliny!—*Even he.* However, I indulged at the same time my beloved inactivity, and whilst I sat at my nets, you would have found me, not with spear and dart, but pen and tablets by my side. I mused and wrote, being resolved if I returned with my hands empty, at least to come home with my pocket-book full. Believe me, this manner of studying is not to be despised; you cannot conceive how greatly exercise contributes to enliven the imagination. Besides the sylvan solitude with which one is surrounded, and the very silence which is observed on these occasions, strongly incline the mind to meditation. For the future therefore let me advise you, whenever you hunt, to take along with you your tablets, as well as your basket and bottle: for be assured you will find Minerva as fond of roaming the hills as Diana. Farewell.

### VII

#### TO OCTAVIUS RUFUS

SEE on what a dizzy eminence you have placed me! You have even invested me with a sovereignty equal to that which Homer attributes to his mighty Jove:

“From heav’n’s imperial throne Jove heard his  
pray’r,

Part he admits, and scatters part in air.”

’Tis thus with a nod or a frown, I may grant or reject your petition as I see proper. To be serious: as I am at liberty, I think, to excuse myself to the Baetici, especially at your request, from being

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

hominem advocationem, ita nec fidei nostrae nec constantiae, quam diligis, convenit adesse contra provinciam, quam tot officiis, tot laboribus, tot etiam periculis meis aliquando devinxerim. Tenebo ergo hoc temperamentum, ut ex duobus, quorum alterutrum petis, eligam id potius, in quo non solum studio tuo, verum etiam iudicio satisfaciam. Neque enim tantopere mihi considerandum est, quid vir optimus in praesentia velis, quam quid semper sis probaturus. Me circa Idus Octobris spero Romae futurum eademque haec praesentem quoque tua meaque fide Gallo confirmaturum; cui tamen iam nunc licet spondeas de animo meo,

*Ἡ καὶ κυανέῃσιν ἐπ' ὀφρύσι νεύσει.<sup>1</sup>*

Cur enim non usquequaque Homericis versibus agam tecum? quatenus tu me tuis agere non pateris, quorum tanta cupiditate ardeo, ut videar mihi hac sola mercede posse corrumpi, ut vel contra Baeticos adsim. Paene praeterii, quod minime praetereundum fuit, accepisse me caryotas optimas, quae nunc cum ficis et boletis certandum habent. Vale.

<sup>1</sup> *Il. i. 528.*



## BOOK I. vii

counsel for them against a single person ; so on the other hand, to oppose a whole province which I have long since attached to me by many good offices, and spared no pains to oblige even at the hazard of my own interest, would be acting inconsistently with my honour, and that uniformity of conduct which I know you admire. I shall steer therefore in this affair a middle course, and of the alternatives which you propose to me, choose that which will satisfy your judgement, as well as your inclination. For I do not look upon myself as obliged to consider so much what you at present desire, as what a man of your worthy character will *always* approve. I hope to be at Rome about the 15th of October, when I will personally pledge our united credit to Gallus in support of my present offer. In the meanwhile you may assure him of my good disposition towards him.

“The sire of men and gods,  
With gracious aspect mild, compliance nods.”

For why should I not continue to quote Homer's verses, since you will not put it in my power to quote any of yours? which yet I so passionately wish for, that I question whether I could withstand such a bribe, even to plead against my old clients the good people of Baetica.—I had almost forgot to mention (what however is of too much importance to be omitted) that I have received the excellent dates you sent me. They are likely to prove very powerful rivals to my favourite figs and morells. Farewell.

# THE LETTERS OF PLINY

## VIII

C. PLINIUS POMPEIO SATURNINO SUO S.

PEROPPORTUNE mihi redditae sunt litterae tuae, quibus flagitabas, ut tibi aliquid ex scriptis meis mitterem, cum ego id ipsum destinassem. Addidisti ergo calcaria sponte currenti pariterque et tibi veniam recusandi laboris et mihi exigendi verecundiam sustulisti. Nam nec me timide uti decet eo, quod oblatum est, nec te gravari, quod depoposcisti. Non est tamen, quod ab homine desidioso aliquid novi operis exspectes. Petiturus sum enim, ut rursus vaces sermoni, quem apud municipales meos habui bibliothecam dedicaturus. Memini quidem te iam quaedam adnotasse, sed generaliter; ideo nunc rogo, ut non tantum universitati eius attendas, verum etiam particulas, qua soles lima, persequaris. Erit enim et post emendationem liberum nobis vel publicare vel continere. Quin immo fortasse hanc ipsam cunctationem nostram in alterutram sententiam emendationis ratio deducet, quae aut indignum editione, dum saepius retractat, inveniet aut dignum, dum id ipsum experitur, efficiet.

Quamquam huius cunctationis meae causae non tam in scriptis quam in ipso materiae genere consistunt; est enim paulo quasi gloriosius et elatius; onerabit hoc modestiam nostram, etiamsi stilus ipse fuerit

## VIII

## TO POMPEIUS SATURNINUS

NOTHING could be more seasonable than the letter which I received from you, wherein you desire me to communicate to you some of my compositions: I was at that very time designing to send you one. Thus you have set spurs to a willing horse; and at once deprived yourself of excuse in refusing a task, and me of scruple in requesting it. For 'twould ill become me to hesitate to make use of your offer; nor must you take the consequence of it with reluctance. However, you must not expect from a man of indolence any thing new. On the contrary I am going to entreat you again to devote your leisure to the speech I made to my countrymen, when I dedicated the public library which I founded for their use. You have already, I remember, obliged me with some general observations upon this piece: but I now beg of you, not only to take a view of it in the whole, but distinctly to criticise it, with your usual exactness, in all its parts. When you have corrected it, I shall still be at liberty either to publish or suppress it. The delay in the meantime will be attended with one of these advantages, that while we are deliberating whether it is fit for the public view, a frequent revisal will either make it so, or convince me that it is not.

Though indeed the principal difficulty with me concerning the publication of this harangue, does not arise so much from the composition itself, as from the subject, which has something in it, I fear, that will look like ostentation. For though the style be ever

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

pressus demissusque, propterea quod cogimur cum de munificentia parentum nostrorum tum de nostra disputare. Anceps hic et lubricus locus est, etiam cum illi necessitas lenocinatur. Etenim, si alienae quoque laudes parum aequis auribus accipi solent, quam difficile est obtinere, ne molesta videatur oratio de se aut de suis disserentis! nam cum ipsi honestati tum aliquanto magis gloriae eius praedicationique invidemus atque ea demum recte facta minus detorquemus et carpinus, quae in obscuritate et silentio reponuntur.

Qua ex causa saepe ipse mecum, nobisne tantum, quidquid est istud, composuisse, an et aliis debeamus. Ut nobis, admonet illud, quod pleraque, quae sunt agenda rei necessaria, eadem peracta nec utilitatem parem nec gratiam retinent. Ac, ne longius exempla repetamus, quid utilius fuit quam munificentiae rationem etiam stilo prosequi? Per hoc enim adsequebamur, primum ut honestis cogitationibus immoraremur, deinde ut pulchritudinem illarum longiore tractatu pervideremus, postremo ut subitae largitionis comitem paenitentiam caveremus. Nascebatur ex his exercitatio quaedam contemnendae pecuniae. Nam, omnes cum homines ad custodiam eius natura restrinxerit, nos contra multum ac diu pensitatus amor liberalitatis com-

## BOOK I. viii

so plain and unassuming, yet as the occasion necessarily led me to touch not only upon the munificence of my ancestors, but my own; my modesty will be greatly embarrassed. A dangerous and slippery topic this, even when one is allured to it by necessity! For if mankind are not very favourable to panegyric, even when given us by others, how difficult is it for a speaker not to seem tedious when he himself, or his family, is the theme of his discourse. Virtue, though stripped of all external advantages, is generally the object of envy, but particularly so, when glory is her attendant; and the world is never so little disposed to wrest and pervert your honest actions, as when they lie unobserved and unapplauded.

For these reasons I frequently ask myself, whether I should have composed this harangue, such as it is, merely for my own private use, or with a view also to the public? The former plan is recommended by the consideration that what may be exceedingly useful and proper in the prosecution of any affair, may lose all its grace and fitness the moment the thing is completed. For instance, to take only the case before us, nothing could be more to my purpose than to set down in black and white the motives of my intended bounty; for by this means I accustomed my mind to generous sentiments; obtained a fuller view of their loveliness by prolonged reflection, and guarded lastly against that repentance which usually attends a hasty execution of liberalities not well considered. This method trained me, as it were, to despise money. For while mankind seem to be universally governed by an innate disposition to accumulate wealth, the cultivation of liberal inclinations in my own breast taught me to free myself

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

munibus avaritiae vinculis eximebat, tantoque laudabilior munificentia nostra fore videbatur, quod ad illam non impetu quodam, sed consilio trahebamur. Accedebat his causis, quod non ludos aut gladiatores, sed annuos sumptus in alimenta ingenuorum pollicebamur. Oculorum porro et aurium voluptates adeo non egent commendatione, ut non tam incitari debeant oratione quam reprimi; ut vero aliquis libenter educationis taedium laboremque suscipiat, non praemiis modo, verum etiam exquisitis adhortationibus impetrandum est. Nam, si medici salubres, sed voluptate carentes cibos blandioribus adloquiis prosequuntur, quanto magis decuit publice consulentem utilissimum munus, sed non perinde popolare comitate orationis inducere? praesertim cum enitendum haberemus, ut, quod parentibus dabatur, et orbis probaretur, honoremque paucorum ceteri patienter et expectarent et mererentur.

Sed, ut tunc communibus magis commodis quam privatae iactantiae studebamus, cum intentionem effectumque muneris nostri vellemus intellegi, ita nunc in ratione edendi veremur, ne forte non

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from the general bondage to avarice, and I thought my munificence would appear the more meritorious, as it should proceed, not from a sudden start of temper, but from the dictates of cool and deliberate reflection. I considered, besides, the nature of my design; I was not engaging myself to endow public games or troupes of gladiators, but to defray the annual expense of maintenance for well-born youths. Furthermore, the pleasures of the eye and ear are so far from needing recommendation, that oratory should be employed to curb, rather than to promote them. But to prevail with anyone, to undertake with cheerfulness the disagreeable business of education, it is necessary to employ, not only rewards, but the most artful incitements. For if Physicians find it expedient to use the most insinuating address in recommending to their patients a wholesome, though far from pleasant, regimen; how much more occasion had *He* to exert all the powers of persuasion, who, out of regard to the public welfare, was endeavouring to reconcile it to a most useful, though not very popular, benefaction: particularly, as my aim was to recommend an establishment calculated singly for the benefit of those who were parents, to such as were not so; and to persuade the *many* that they should patiently wait for and endeavour to deserve an honour, of which, at present, a *few* only could partake.

But as at that time, when I attempted to explain and enforce the design and benefit of my institution, I considered more the general good of my countrymen than any reputation which might arise to myself; so I am apprehensive if I publish

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

aliorum utilitatibus, sed propriae laudi servisse videamur. Praeterea meminimus, quanto maiore animo honestatis fructus in conscientia quam in fama reponatur. Sequi enim gloria, non adpeti debet, nec, si casu aliquo non sequatur, idcirco, quod gloriam non meruit,<sup>1</sup> minus pulchrum est. Ii vero, qui benefacta sua verbis adornant, non ideo praedicare, quia fecerint, sed ut praedicarent, fecisse creduntur. Sic, quod magnificum referente alio fuisset, ipso, qui gesserat, recensente vanescit. Homines enim, cum rem destruere non possunt, iactationem eius incessunt. Ita, si silenda feceris, factum ipsum, si laudanda, quod non sileas, ipse culparis. Me vero peculiaris quaedam impedit ratio. Etenim hunc ipsum sermonem non apud populum, sed apud decuriones habui, nec in propatulo, sed in curia. Vereor ergo, ut sit satis congruens, cum in dicendo adsentationem vulgi adclamationemque defugerim, nunc eadem illa editione sectari, cumque plebem ipsam, cui consulebatur, limine curiae parietibusque discreverim, ne quam in speciem ambitionis inciderem, nunc eos etiam, ad quos ex munere nostro nihil pertinet praeter exemplum, velut obvia ostentatione conqui-

<sup>1</sup> non meruit *Fpra, Otto, Müller, non om. rel.*



## BOOK I. viii

that piece, it will seem as if I had a view rather to my own credit than the benefit of others. Besides, I am sensible how much nobler it is to place the reward of virtue in the silent approbation of one's own breast than in the applause of the world. Glory ought to be the consequence, not the motive of our actions ; and though it should sometimes happen not to attend the worthy deed, yet such a deed is none the less amiable for having missed the applause it deserved. But the world is apt to suspect that those who celebrate their own generous acts, do not extol them because they performed them, but performed them that they might have the pleasure of extolling them. Thus the splendour of an action which would have shone out in full lustre if related by another, vanishes and dies away when he that did it tells the tale. Such is the disposition of mankind, if they cannot blast an action, they will censure the parade of it ; and whether you do what does not deserve to be taken notice of, or take notice yourself of what does, either way you incur reproach. In my own case there is a peculiar circumstance that impedes me : This speech was pronounced not before the people, but the local senate ; not out of doors, but in the town-hall ; I doubt therefore it will appear inconsistent that I, who, when I delivered it, avoided popular applause, should now, by publishing this performance, appear to court the same : that I, who would not admit to the town-hall the very populace who were interested in my benefaction, lest it might be suspected I was actuated in this affair by any ambitious views, should now seem to solicit admiration, by forwardly displaying it to such as have no other concern in my munificence than the

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

rere. Habes cunctationis meae causas ; obsequar tamen consilio tuo, cuius mihi auctoritas pro ratione sufficit. Vale.

### IX

C. PLINIUS MINICIO FUNDANO SUO S.

MIRUM est, quam singulis diebus in urbe ratio aut constet aut constare videatur, pluribus iunctisque<sup>1</sup> non constet. Nam, si quem interrogas, 'Hodie quid egisti?' respondeat: 'Officio togae virilis interfui; sponsalia aut nuptias frequentavi; ille me ad signandum testamentum, ille in advocationem, ille in consilium rogavit.' Haec quo die feceris, necessaria; eadem, si quotidie fecisse te reputes, inania videntur, multo magis, cum secesseris. Tunc enim subit recordatio: 'Quot dies quam frigidis rebus absumpsi!' Quod evenit mihi, postquam in Laurentino meo aut lego aliquid aut scribo aut etiam corpori vaco, cuius fulturis animus sustinetur. Nihil audio, quod audisse, nihil dico, quod dixisse paeniteat; nemo apud me quemquam sinistris sermonibus carpit, neminem ipse

<sup>1</sup> iunctisque *F Ricc. a, K<sup>2</sup>*, cunctisque *Dpr.*

<sup>a</sup> At the age of fifteen, Roman boys discarded the *toga praetexta* (white, with a purple border) for the plain white *toga virilis*, the dress of adult citizens. The "coming-of-age" ceremonies included a sacrifice to the household Lares, a family procession to the Forum, and a sacrifice offered in the Capitol.

## BOOK I. viii.-ix

benefit of example. These are the scruples which have occasioned my delaying to give this piece to the public; but I submit them entirely to your judgement, which I shall ever esteem as a sufficient reason for my conduct. Farewell.

### IX

#### TO MINICIUS FUNDANUS

ONE cannot but be surprised, [that take any single day in Rome, the reckoning comes out right, or at least seems to do so; and yet, if you take them in the lump, the reckoning comes out wrong.] Ask anyone how he has been employed to-day? he will tell you, perhaps, "I have been at the ceremony of assuming the *manly robe*; this friend invited me to a betrothal, this to a wedding; that desired me to attend the hearing of his cause; one begged me to be witness to his will; another called me to sit as co-assessor." These are offices which, on the day one is engaged in them, appear necessary; yet they seem *bagatelles* when reckoned as your daily occupation—and far more so, when you have quitted Rome for the country. Then one is apt to reflect, How many days have I spent on trifles! At least it is a reflection which frequently comes across me at Laurentum, after I have been employing myself in my studies, or even in the necessary care of the animal machine (for the body must be repaired and supported, if we would preserve the mind in all its vigour). In that peaceful retreat, I neither hear nor speak anything of which I have occasion to repent. I suffer none to repeat to me the whispers of malice; nor do I censure

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

reprehendo, nisi tamen me, cum parum commode scribo; nulla spe, nullo timore sollicitor, nullis rumoribus inquietor, mecum tantum et cum libellis loquor. O rectam sinceramque vitam! o dulce otium honestumque ac paene omni negotio pulchrius! O mare, o litus, verum secretumque *μυστήριον*, quam multa invenitis, quam multa dictatis! Proinde tu quoque strepitum istum inanemque discursum et multum ineptos labores, ut primum fuerit occasio, relinque teque studiis vel otio trade. Satius est enim, ut Atilius noster eruditissime simul et facetissime dixit, otiosum esse quam nihil agere. Vale.

### X

#### C. PLINIUS ATTIO CLEMENTI SUO S.

Si quando urbs nostra liberalibus studiis floruit, nunc maxime floret. Multa claraque exempla sunt; sufficeret unum, Euphrates philosophus. Hunc ego in Syria, cum adolescentulus militarem, penitus et domi inspexi amarique ab eo laboravi; etsi non erat laborandum. Est enim obvius et expositus plenusque humanitate, quam praecipit. Atque utinam sic ipse, quam spem tunc ille de me concepit, impleverim, ut ille multum virtutibus suis addidit! aut ego nunc illas magis miror, quia magis intellego; quamquam

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<sup>a</sup> A Stoic, who taught in Tyre until he followed Vespasian to Rome. When aged and infirm, he committed suicide, agreeably to Stoic principles (118 A.D.).

## BOOK I. ix.-x

any man, unless myself, when I am dissatisfied with my compositions. There I live undisturbed by rumour, and free from the anxious solitudes of hope or fear, conversing only with myself and my books. True and genuine life! pleasing and honourable repose! More, perhaps, to be desired than the noblest employments! Thou solemn sea and solitary shore, best and most retired scene for contemplation, with how many noble thoughts have you inspired me! Snatch then, my friend, as I have, the first occasion of leaving the noisy town with all its very empty pursuits, and devote your days to study, or even resign them to sloth: for as my ingenious friend Atilius pleasantly said, "It is better to do nothing, than to be *doing of nothing*." Farewell.

### X

#### TO ATTIVUS CLEMENS

If ever polite literature flourished at Rome, it certainly does now, of which I could give you many eminent instances: I will content myself however with naming only Euphrates the philosopher.<sup>a</sup> I made intimate acquaintance with this person in my youth, when I served in the army in Syria and took some pains to gain his affection: though that indeed was nothing difficult, for he is exceeding open to access, and full of that humanity which he professes. I should think myself extremely happy if I had as much answered the expectations he at that time conceived of me, as he has increased his own excellencies. But perhaps I admire these more now, than I did then, because I understand them better; though I

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

ne nunc quidem satis intellego. Ut enim de pictore, scalptore, fictore nisi artifex iudicare, ita nisi sapiens non potest perspicere sapientem. Quantum mihi tamen cernere datur, multa in Euphrate sic eminent et elucent, ut mediocriter quoque doctos advertant et adficient. Disputat subtiliter, graviter, ornate, frequenter etiam Platoniam illam sublimitatem et latitudinem effingit. Sermo est copiosus et varius, dulcis in primis, et qui repugnantes quoque ducat, impellat. Ad hoc proceritas corporis, decora facies, demissus capillus, ingens et cana barba; quae licet fortuita et inania putentur, illi tamen plurimum venerationis adquirunt. Nullus horror in cultu, nulla tristitia, multum severitatis; reverearis occursum, non reformides. Vitae sanctitas summa, comitas par; insectatur vitia, non homines; nec castigat errantes, sed emendat. Sequaris monentem attentus et pendens et persuaderi tibi, etiam cum persuaserit, cupias.

Iam vero liberi tres, duo mares, quos diligentissime instituit. Socer Pompeius Iulianus cum cetera vita tum vel hoc uno magnus et clarus, quod

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<sup>a</sup> Otherwise unknown.

## BOOK I. x

do not fully understand them yet. For as none but those who are skilled in Painting, Statuary, or the plastic art, can form a right judgement of any master in those arts; so a man must himself have made great advances in philosophy, before he is capable of forming a just notion of a philosopher. However, as far as I am qualified to determine, Euphrates is possessed of so many shining talents, that he cannot fail to strike and engage even the somewhat illiterate. He reasons with much force, penetration, and elegance, and frequently embodies all the sublime and luxuriant eloquence of Plato. His style is rich and various, and at the same time so wonderfully sweet, that it seduces the attention of the most unwilling hearer. His outward appearance is agreeable to all the rest: he has a tall figure, a comely aspect, long hair, and a large white beard: circumstances which though they may probably be thought trifling and accidental, contribute however to gain him much reverence. There is no uncouthness in his manner, which is grave, but not austere; and his approach commands respect without creating awe. Distinguished as he is by the sanctity of his life, he is no less so by his polite and affable address. He points his eloquence against the vices, not the persons of mankind, and without chastising reclaims the wanderer. His exhortations so captivate your attention, that you hang as it were upon his lips; and even after the heart is convinced, the ear still wishes to listen to the harmonious reasoner.

His family consists of three children (two of which are sons) whom he educates with the utmost care. His father-in-law, Pompeius Julianus,<sup>a</sup> as he greatly distinguished himself in every other part of his life,

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

ipse provinciae princeps inter altissimas condiciones generum non honoribus principem, sed sapientia elegit. Quamquam quid ego plura de viro, quo mihi frui non licet? an, ut magis angar, quod non licet? Nam distringor officio ut maximo sic molestissimo; sedeo pro tribunali, subnoto libellos, conficio tabulas, scribo plurimas, sed inlitteratissimas litteras. Soleo nonnumquam (nam id ipsum quando contingit!) de his occupationibus apud Euphratem queri. Ille me consolatur, adfirmat etiam esse hanc philosophiae et quidem pulcherrimam partem, agere negotium publicum, cognoscere, iudicare, promere et exercere iustitiam, quaeque ipsi doceant, in usu habere. Mihi tamen hoc unum non persuadet, satius esse ista facere quam cum illo dies totos audiendo discendoque consumere. Quo magis te, cui vacat, hortor, cum in urbem proxime veneris (venias autem ob hoc maturius), illi te expoliendum limandumque permittas. Neque enim ego ut multi invideo aliis bonum, quo ipse careo, sed contra sensum quendam voluptatemque percipio, si ea, quae mihi denegantur, amicis video superesse. Vale.



## BOOK I. x

so particularly in this, that though he was himself a leading personage in his province, yet among many prospective sons-in-law of the highest rank, he chose the first in wisdom, though not in dignity. But to dwell any longer upon the virtues of a man, whose conversation I am so unfortunate as not to have leisure to enjoy, what would it avail but to increase my uneasiness that I cannot enjoy it? My time is wholly taken up in the execution of an office highly important and correspondingly troublesome; in hearing of causes, annotating petitions, passing accounts, and writing of letters; but letters, alas! of the most unlettered description. I sometimes complain to Euphrates (for how seldom have I leisure even for that!) of these unpleasing occupations. He endeavours to comfort me by affirming that to be engaged in the service of the public, to hear and determine causes, to explain the laws, and administer justice, is a part, and the noblest part too, of Philosophy, as it is reducing to practice what her professors teach in speculation. It may be so; but that it is as *agreeable* as to spend whole days in attending to his instructive conversation—on this one point he will never be able to convince me. I all the more strongly recommend it to you, who have leisure, the next time you come to Rome (and you will come, I dare say, so much the sooner) to take the benefit of his elegant and refined instructions. I am not, you see, in the number of those who envy others the happiness they cannot share themselves: on the contrary, it is a very sensible pleasure to me, when I find my friends abounding in enjoyments from which I have the misfortune to be excluded. Farewell.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

### XI

C. PLINIUS FABIO IUSTO SUO S.

OLIM nullas mihi epistulas mittis. 'Nihil est,' inquis, 'quod scribam.' At hoc ipsum scribe, nihil esse, quod scribas, vel solum illud, unde incipere priores solebant; 'Si vales, bene est; ego valeo.' Hoc mihi sufficit; est enim maximum. Ludere me putas? serio peto. Fac sciam, quid agas, quod sine sollicitudine summa nescire non possum. Vale.

### XII

C. PLINIUS CALESTRIO TIRONI SUO S.

IACTURAM gravissimam feci, si iactura dicenda est tanti viri amissio. Decessit Corellius Rufus et quidem sponte, quod dolorem meum exulcerat. Est enim luctuosissimum genus mortis, quae non ex natura nec fatalis videtur. Nam utcunque in illis, qui morbo finiuntur, magnum ex ipsa necessitate solatium est, in iis vero, quos arcessita mors aufert, hic insanabilis dolor est, quod creduntur potuisse diu vivere. Corellium quidem summa ratio, quae sapien-

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## BOOK I. xi.-xii

### XI

#### TO FABIVS JUSTVS

It is long since I received a letter from you. You will allege, perhaps, you have nothing to write : but let me have the satisfaction at least of seeing it under your hand, or tell me merely in the good old style of exordium, "If you are well, I am so." I shall be contented even with that; as indeed that single circumstance from a friend includes every thing. You may possibly think I jest : but believe me I am extremely in earnest. Let me know how it is with you ; for I cannot be ignorant of that, without the utmost anxiety. Farewell.

### XII

#### TO CALESTRIUS TIRO

I HAVE suffered a most heavy *loss* ; if that word is strong enough to express the misfortune which has deprived me of so excellent a man. Corellius Rufus is dead ! and dead too by his own act ! a circumstance of great aggravation to my affliction, as that sort of death which we cannot impute either to the course of nature, or the hand of providence, is of all others the most to be lamented. It affords much consolation in the loss of those friends whom disease snatches from us, that they fall by the inevitable fate of mankind : but those who destroy themselves leave us under the inconsolable reflection that they had it in their power to have lived long. 'Tis true Corellius



## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

tibus pro necessitate est, ad hoc consilium compulit, quamquam plurimas vivendi causas habentem, optimam conscientiam, optimam famam, maximam auctoritatem, praeterea filiam, uxorem, nepotem, sorores interque tot pignora veros amicos. Sed tam longa, tam iniqua valetudine conflictabatur, ut haec tanta pretia vivendi mortis rationibus vincerentur.

Tertio et tricensimo anno, ut ipsum audiebam, pedum dolore correptus est. Patrius hic illi; nam plerumque morbi quoque per successiones quasdam ut alia traduntur. Hunc abstinencia, sanctitate, quoad viridis aetas, vicit et fregit; novissime cum senectute ingravescentem viribus animi sustinebat, cum quidem incredibilis cruciatus et indignissima tormenta pateretur. Iam enim dolor non pedibus solis ut prius insidebat, sed omnia membra pervagabatur. Veni ad eum Domitiani temporibus in suburbano iacentem. Servi e cubiculo recesserunt; habebat enim hoc moris, quotiens intrasset fidelior amicus; quin etiam uxor quamquam omnis secreti capacissima digrediebatur. Circumtulit oculos et 'cur,' inquit 'me putas hos tantos dolores tamdiu sustinere? ut

## BOOK I. xii

had many inducements to be fond of life ; a blameless conscience, high reputation, and great dignity, together with all the tender endearments of a wife, a daughter, a grandson, and sisters, and amidst these considerable pledges of happiness, many and faithful friends. Still it must be owned he had the highest reason (which to a wise man will always have the force of necessity) to determine him in this resolution. He had long laboured under so tedious and painful a distemper, that even these blessings, great and valuable as they are, could not balance his inducements to die.

In his thirty-third year (as I have frequently heard him say) he was seized with the gout in his feet. This he received from his father ; for diseases, as well as possessions, are oftentimes transmitted by a kind of inheritance. A life of abstinence and virtue had something broke the force of this distemper while he had strength and youth to struggle with it ; as a manly courage supported him under the increasing weight of it in his old age though suffering the most incredible and cruel tortures, since the gout by then was not only in his feet, but had spread itself over his whole body. In the reign of Domitian, I made him a visit at his country-house, where I found him lying sick. As soon as I entered his chamber, his servants withdrew : for such was his constant rule when any very intimate friend was with him : he even carried it so far as to dismiss his wife upon such occasions, though worthy of the highest confidence. 'Looking round about him, "Do you know," says he "why I endure life under these cruel agonies ? It is with the hope that I may

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

scilicet isti latroni vel uno die supersim.' Dedisse huic animo par corpus, fecisset, quod optabat.

Adfuit tamen deus voto, cuius ille compos ut iam securus liberque moriturus multa illa vitae, sed minor retinacula abruptit. Increverat valetudo, quam temperantia mitigare temptavit; perseverantem constantia fugit. Iam dies alter, tertius, quartus; abstinebat cibo. Misit ad me uxor eius Hispulla communem amicum C. Geminium cum tristissimo nuntio destinasse Corellium mori nec aut suis aut filiae precibus flecti, solum superesse me, a quo revocari posset ad vitam. Cucurri. Perveneram in proximum, cum mihi ab eadem Hispulla Iulius Atticus nuntiat nihil iam ne me quidem impetraturum; tam obstinate magis ac magis induruisse. Dixerat sane medico admoventi cibum: κέρικα, quae vox quantum admirationis in animo meo tantum desiderii reliquit.

Cogito, quo amico, quo viro caream. Implevit quidem annum septimum et sexagensimum, quae aetas etiam robustissimis satis longa est; scio. Evasit perpetuam

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<sup>a</sup> Domitian.

## BOOK I. xii

outlive, at least for one day, that brigand." <sup>a</sup> And had you given him strength equal to his resolution, he would infallibly have brought to pass what he desired.

Still, Heaven heard his prayer, and having obtained it, he broke through those great, but now insufficient attachments to the world, since he could die in possession of security and freedom. His distemper increased; and as it now grew too violent to admit of any relief from temperance, he resolutely determined to put an end to its uninterrupted attacks by an effort of heroism. He had refused all sustenance for four days, when his wife, Hispulla, sent to me our common friend Geminius, with the melancholy news ~~that~~ he was resolved to die; and that she and her daughter having in vain joined in their most tender persuasions to divert him from his purpose, the only hope they had now left was my endeavours to reconcile him to life. I ran to his house with the utmost precipitation. As I approached it, I met a second messenger from Hispulla, Julius Attius, who informed me there was nothing to be hoped for, even from me, as he grew more and more inflexible in his resolution. What confirmed their fears was an expression he made use of to his physician, who pressed him to take some nourishment: "'tis resolved," he said: an expression which as it raised my admiration of his greatness of soul, so it does my grief for the loss of him.

I am every moment reflecting what a valuable friend, what an excellent man I am deprived of. That he was arrived to his sixty-seventh year, which is an age even the strongest seldom exceed, I well know; that he is delivered from a life of

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

valetudinem ; scio. Decessit superstitibus suis, florere te republica, quae illi omnibus suis carior erat ; et hoc scio. Ego tamen tamquam et iuvenis et firmis simili mortem doleo, doleo autem (licet me imbecillur putes) meo nomine. Amisi enim, amisi vitae meae te stem, rectorem, magistrum. In summa dicam, quod recenti dolore contubernali meo Calvisio dixi : ‘ Vereor, ne negligentius vivam.’ Proinde adhibe solacia mihi, non haec : ‘ Senex erat, infirmus erat ’ (haec enim novi), sed nova aliqua, sed magna, quae audierim nunquam, legerim nunquam. Nam, quae audivi quae legi, sponte succurrunt, sed tanto dolore superantur. Vale.

### XIII

*see Index*

C. PLINIUS SIOSIO SENECIONI SUO S.

MAGNUM proventum poëtarum annus hic attulit ; toto mense Aprili nullus fere dies, quo non recitaret aliquis. Iuvat me, quod vigent studia, proferunt se ingenia hominum et ostentant, tametsi ad audiendum pigre coitur. Plerique in stationibus



## BOOK I. xii.-xiii

continual pain ; that he left a family ; that he left (what he loved even more) his country in a flourishing state ; all this I know. Still I cannot forbear to weep for him as if he had been in the prime and vigour of his days : and I weep (shall I own my weakness ?) upon a private account. For I have lost, oh ! I have lost the witness, the guide, and the director of my life ! In fine, I confess to you what I did to my friend Calvisius in the first transport of my grief—I sadly fear, now that I am no longer under his eye, I shall not keep so strict a guard over my conduct. Speak comfort to me therefore, I entreat you ; not by telling me that “he was old, that he was infirm” ; all this I know ; but by supplying me with some arguments that are uncommon and resistless, that neither the writings nor the discourses of the philosophers can teach me. For all that I have heard and all that I have read occur to me of themselves ; but all these are by far too weak to support me under so heavy an affliction. Farewell.

### XIII

#### TO SOSIUS SENECIO

THIS year has proved extremely fertile in poetical productions : during the whole month of April, scarce a day has passed wherein we have not been entertained with the recital of some poem. It is a pleasure to me to find, notwithstanding there seems to be so little disposition in the public to attend assemblies of this kind, that literary pursuits still flourish, and men of genius are not discouraged from producing their performances. The greater part of

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

sedent tempusque audiendi fabulis conterunt ac subinde sibi nuntiari iubent, an iam recitator intraverit, an dixerit praefationem, an ex magna parte evolverit librum ; tum demum ac tunc quoque lente cunctanterque veniunt nec tamen permanent, sed ante finem recedunt, alii dissimulanter et furtim, alii simpliciter et libere. At hercule memoria parentum Claudium Caesarem ferunt, cum in Palatio spatiaretur audissetque clamorem, causam requisisse, cumque dictum esset recitare Nonianum, subitum recitanti inopinatumque venisse. Nunc otiosissimus quisque multo ante rogatus et identidem admonitus aut non venit aut, si venit, queritur se diem, quia non perdidit, perdidisse. Sed tanto magis laudandi probandique sunt, quos a scribendi recitandique studio haec auditorum vel desidia vel superbia non retardat. Equidem prope nemini defui. Erant sane plerique amici ; neque enim quisquam est fere, qui studia, ut non simul et nos amet. His ex causis longius, quam destinaveram, tempus in urbe consumpsi. Possum iam repetere secessum et scribere aliquid, quod non recitem, ne videar, quorum recitationibus adfui, non

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## BOOK I. xiii

the audience which is collected upon these occasions seat themselves in the ante-chambers; spend the time of the recitation in talk and send in every now and then to inquire whether the author is come in, whether he has read the preface, or whether he has almost finished the piece. Not till then, and even then with the utmost deliberation, they just look in, and withdraw again before the end, some by stealth, and others without ceremony. It was not thus in the time of our ancestors. It is reported that Claudius Caesar, one day hearing a noise as he walked on the Palatine, inquired the occasion of it, and being informed that Nonianus was reciting a composition of his, went immediately to the place, and surprised the author with his presence. But now, were one to bespeak the company even of the most idle man living, and remind him of the appointment ever so often, or ever so long beforehand, either he would avoid it, or, if not, would complain of having *lost a day*; and for no other reason, but because he had *not* lost it. So much the rather do *those* authors deserve our encouragement and applause, who have resolution to persevere in their studies, and exhibit their performances, notwithstanding this indolence or pride of their audience. For my own part, I scarce ever refuse to be present upon such occasions. Though, to say truth, the authors have generally been my friends; as indeed there are few friends of learning who are not. It is this has kept me in town longer than I intended. I am now however at liberty to withdraw to my retirement, and write something myself: but without any intentions of reciting in my turn. I would not have it thought

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

auditor fuisse, sed creditor. Nam ut in ceteris rebus ita in audiendi officio perit gratia, si reposcatur. Vale.

### XIV

C. PLINIUS IUNIO MAURICO SUO S.

PETIS, ut fratris tui filiae prospiciam maritum ; quod merito mihi potissimum iniungis. Scis enim, quantopere summum illum virum suspexerim dilexerimque, quibus ille adulescentiam meam exhortationibus foverit, quibus etiam laudibus, ut laudandus viderer, effecerit. Nihil est, quod a te mandari mihi aut maius aut gratius, nihil, quod honestius a me suscipi possit, quam ut eligam iuvenem, ex quo nasci nepotes Aruleno Rustico deceat. Qui quidem diu quaerendus fuisset, nisi paratus et quasi provisus esset Minicius Acilianus, qui me ut iuvenis iuvenem (est enim minor pauculis annis) familiarissime diligit, reveretur ut senem. Nam ita a me formari et institui cupit, ut ego a vobis solebam.

Patria est ei Brixia ex illa nostra Italia, quae multum adhuc verecundiae, frugalitatis atque etiam rusticitatis antiquae retinet ac servat. Pater Minicius Macrinus, equestris ordinis princeps, quia

## BOOK I. xiii.—xiv

that I rather *lent* than gave my attendance ; for in these, as in all other good offices, the obligation ceases the moment you seem to expect a return. Farewell.

### XIV

#### TO JUNIUS MAURICUS

You desire me to look out a husband for your niece ; and it is with justice you enjoin *me* that office. You were a witness to the esteem and affection I bore that great man her father, and with what noble instructions he formed my youth, and taught me to deserve those praises he was pleased to bestow upon me. You could not give me then a more important, or more agreeable commission, nor could I be employed in an office of higher honour, than of choosing a young man worthy of continuing the family of Rusticus Arulenus : a choice I should be long in determining if I were not acquainted with Minicius Acilianus, who seems formed for our purpose. While he loves me with that warmth of affection which is usual between young men of equal years (as indeed I have the advance of him but by very few) he reveres me at the same time with all the deference due to age ; and is as desirous to model himself by my instructions, as I was by those of yourself and your brother.

He is a native of Brixia, a city of that Italy we both love, the Italy which still retains much of the sobriety, the frugality—ay, and the rustic plainness—of ancient manners. He is son to Minicius Macrinus, whose humble desires were satisfied with being first in the rank of the Equestrian order : for

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

nihil altius voluit; adlectus a divo Vespasiano inter Praetorios honestam quietem huic nostra ambitioni dicam an dignitati constantissime praetulit. Habet aviam maternam Serranam Proculam municipio Patavino. Nosti loci mores; Serranum tamen Patavinis quoque severitatis exemplum est. Contigit et avunculus ei P. Acilius gravitate, prudentia, fide prope singulari. In summa nihil erit in domo tota, quod non tibi tanquam in tua placeat Aciliano vero ipsi plurimum vigoris et industriae quamquam in maxima verecundia. Quaesturam, tribunatum, praeturam honestissime percucurrit ac iam pro se tibi necessitatem ambiendi remisit. Est illi facies liberalis multo sanguine, multo rubore suffusa, est ingenua totius corporis pulchritudo et quidam senatorius decor. Quae ego nequaquam arbitror negligenda; debet enim hoc castitati puellarum quasi praemium dari.

Nescio, an adiciam esse patri eius amplas facultates. Nam, cum imaginor vos, quibus quaerimus generum, silendum de facultatibus puto; cum publicos mores atque etiam leges civitatis intueor, quae vel in primis census hominum spectandos arbitrantur, ne id quidem praetereundum videtur. Et sane de posteris et his pluribus cogitanti

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<sup>a</sup> The Emperor, in his capacity of Censor, could not only admit extra members into the Senate, but confer honorary official rank on his nominees.

though he was admitted to Praetorian rank by Vespasian,<sup>a</sup> yet with a determined greatness of mind, he rather preferred an elegant repose, to the ambitious, shall I call them, or honourable pursuits in which we in public life are engaged. His grandmother on the mother's side is Serrana Procula, of Padua: you are no stranger to the manners of that place; yet Serrana is looked upon, even among these reserved people, as an exemplary instance of strict virtue. Acilius, his uncle, is a man of singular gravity, wisdom, and integrity. In a word, you will find nothing throughout his family but what you would approve in your own. Minicius himself has great vivacity, as well as application, joined at the same time with a most amiable and becoming modesty. He has already, with much credit, passed through the offices of Quaestor, Tribune, and Praetor, so that you will be spared the trouble of soliciting for him those honourable employments. He has a genteel and ruddy countenance, with a certain noble mien that speaks the man of distinction: advantages, I think, by no means to be slighted, since I look upon them as the proper tribute to virgin innocence.

I am doubtful whether I should add that his father is very rich. When I consider the character of those who require a husband of my choosing, I feel it is unnecessary to mention wealth; but when I reflect upon the prevailing manners of the age, and even the laws of Rome, which rank a man according to his possessions, it certainly claims some notice: and indeed in choosing a match, where a perhaps numerous progeny are to be considered, it is an article that well deserves to be taken into the account. You will be inclined

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

hic quoque in condicionibus deligendis ponendus est calculus. Tu fortasse me putes indulsisse amoris meo supraque ista, quam res patitur, sustulisse. At ego fide mea spondeo futurum ut omnia longe ampliora, quam a me praedicantur, invenias. Diligo quidem adolescentem ardentissime, sicut meretur; sed hoc ipsum amantis est, non onerare eum laudibus. Vale.

### XV

*see Index*  
C. PLINIUS SEPTICIO CLABO SUO S.

HEUS tu! promittis ad coenam, nec venis. Dicitur ius; ad assem impendium reddes nec id modicum. Paratae erant lactucae singulae, cochleae ternae, ova bina, halica cum mulso et nive (nam hanc quoque computabis, immo hanc in primis, quae perit in ferculo), olivae, betacei, cucurbitae, bulbi, alia mille non minus lauta. Audisses comoedum vel lectorem vel lyristen vel, quae mea liberalitas, omnes. At tu apud nescio quem ostrea, vulvas, echinos, Gaditanas maluisti. Dabis poenas, non dico quas. Dure fecisti;

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## BOOK I. xiv.-xv

perhaps to suspect, that affection has had too great a share in the character I have been drawing, and that I have heightened it beyond the truth. But I will stake all my credit, you will find every thing far beyond what I have represented. I confess, indeed, I love Minicius (as he justly deserves) with all the warmth of the most ardent affection; but for that very reason I would not overload him with encomiums. Farewell.

### XV

#### TO SEPTICIUS CLARUS

How happened it, my friend, that you did not keep your engagement the other night to sup with me? Now take notice, the court is sitting, and you shall fully reimburse me the expense I was at to treat you—which, let me tell you, was no small sum. I had prepared, you must know, a lettuce and three snails apiece; with two eggs, barley-water, some sweet wine and snow (the snow most certainly I shall charge to your account, and at a high rate, as 'twas spoiled in serving). Besides all these curious dishes, there were olives, beets, gourds, shalots, and a hundred other dainties equally sumptuous. You should likewise have been entertained either with an interlude, the rehearsal of a poem, or a piece of music, as you like best; or (such was my liberality) with all three. But the oysters, chitterlings, sea-urchins and Spanish dancers of a certain — I know not who, were, it seems, more to your taste. However I shall have my revenge of you depend upon it;—in what manner, shall at

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

invidisti, nescio an tibi, certe mihi, sed tamen et tibi. Quantum nos lusissemus, risissemus, studuissemus ! Potes apparatius coenare apud multos, nusquam hilarius, simplicius, incautius. In summa experire et, nisi postea te aliis potius excusaveris, mihi semper excusa. Vale.

### XVI

C. PLINIUS ERUCIO SUO S.

AMABAM Pompeium Saturninum, hunc dico nostrum, laudabamque eius ingenium, etiam antequam scirem, quam varium, quam flexibile, quam multiplex esset : nunc vero totum me tenet, habet, possidet. Audivi causas agentem acriter et ardentem, nec minus polite et ornatè, sive meditata sive subita proferret. Adsunt aptae crebraeque sententiae, gravis et decora constructio, sonantia verba et antiqua. Omnia haec mire placent, cum impetu quodam et flumine praevehuntur, placent, si retractentur. Senties quod ego, cum orationes eius in manus sumpseris, quas facile cuilibet veterum, quorum est aemulus, comparabis.

## BOOK I. xv.—xvi

present be a secret. In good truth it was not kind thus to mortify your friend, I had almost said yourself;—and upon second thoughts I do say so : for how agreeably should we have spent the evening, in laughing, trifling, and instruction ! You may sup, I confess, at many places more splendidly ; but you can be treated no where, believe me, with more unconstrained cheerfulness, simplicity and freedom : only make the experiment ; and if you do not ever afterwards prefer my table to any other, never favour me with your company again. Farewell.

### XVI

#### TO ERUCIUS

I CONCEIVED an affection for Pompeius Saturninus (I mean our friend of that name), and admired his genius, even long before I knew the extensive variety of his talents : but he has now taken full and unreserved possession of my whole heart. I have heard him in the unpremeditated, as well as studied speech, plead with no less warmth and energy, than grace and eloquence. He abounds with just reflexions ; his periods are graceful and majestic ; his words resonant with antiquity. These united qualities infinitely delight you, not only when you are carried along, if I may so say, with the resistless flow of his charming and emphatical elocution ; but when considered distinct and apart from that advantage. I am persuaded you will be of this opinion when you peruse his orations, and will not hesitate to place him in the same rank with any of the ancients, whom he

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Idem tamen in historia magis satisfaciet vel brevitatem vel luce vel suavitate vel splendore etiam et sublimitate narrandi. Nam in concionibus idem, qui in orationibus suis est ; pressior tamen et circumscriptior et adductior. Praeterea facit versus, quales Catullus aut Calvus. Quantum illis leporis, dulcedinis, amaritudinis, amoris ! inserit sane, sed data opera, mollibus lenibusque duriusculos quosdam et hoc quasi Catullus aut Calvus.

Legit mihi nuper epistulas, quas uxoris esse dicebat. Plautum vel Terentium metro solutum legi credidi. Quae sive uxoris sunt, ut affirmat, sive ipsius, ut negat, pari gloria dignus est, qui aut illa componat aut uxorem, quam virginem accepit, tam doctam politamque reddiderit.

Est ergo mecum per diem totum ; eundem, antequam scribam, eundem, cum scripsi, eundem, etiam cum remittor, non tanquam eundem lego. Quod te quoque ut facias et hortor et moneo. Neque enim debet operibus eius obesse, quod vivit. An, si inter eos, quos nunquam vidimus, florisset, non solum libros eius, verum etiam im-

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<sup>a</sup> i.e. the speeches he put into the mouths of his characters.

## BOOK I. xvi

emulates. But you will view him with still higher pleasure in the character of an historian, where his narrative style is by turns concise, clear, smooth, or actually glowing and sublime; and the same eloquence, though more compressed and limited, runs through his harangues,<sup>a</sup> which distinguishes his own pleadings. But these are not all his excellencies; he has composed several poetical pieces in the manner of Catullus or of Calvus. What strokes of wit, what sweetness of numbers, what pointed satire, and what touches of the tender passion appear in his verses! He sometimes, but designedly, introduces harsher notes into his smooth and flowing numbers, in imitation too of those admired poets.

He read to me, the other day, some letters which he assured me were written by his wife: I fancied I was hearing Plautus or Terence in prose. If they are that lady's (as he positively affirms) or his own, which he absolutely denies, either way he deserves equal applause; whether for writing so politely himself, or for having so highly improved and refined the genius of his wife, who was but a girl when he married her.

His works are never out of my hands; and whether I sit down to write any thing myself, or to revise what I have already written, or am in a disposition to amuse myself, I constantly take up this same author; and, as often as I do so, he is still new. Let me strongly recommend him to the same degree of intimacy with you; nor be it any prejudice to his merit that he is a contemporary writer. Had he flourished in some distant age, not only his works, but the very pictures and statues of him would have been passionately inquired after;

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

agines conquireremus ; eiusdem nunc honor praesentis et gratia quasi satietate languescet ? At hoc pravum malignumque est, non admirari hominem admiratione dignissimum, quia videre, adloqui, audire, complecti nec laudare tantum, verum etiam amare contingit. Vale.

### XVII

C. PLINIUS CORNELIO TITIANO SUO S.

EST adhuc curae hominibus fides et officium, sunt, qui defunctorum quoque amicos agant. Titinius Capito ab imperatore nostro impetravit, ut sibi liceret statuam L. Silani in foro ponere. Pulchrum et magna laude dignum amicitia principis in hoc uti, quantumque gratia valeas, aliorum honoribus experiri. Est omnino Capitoni in usu claros viros colere ; mirum est, qua religione, quo studio imagines Brutorum, Cassiorum, Catonum domi, ubi potest, habeat. Idem clarissimi cuiusque vitam egregiis carminibus exornat. Scias ipsum plurimis virtutibus abundare, qui alienas sic amat. Redditus est L. Silano debitus honor, cuius immortalitati Capito prospexit pariter et

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## BOOK I. xvi.-xvii

and shall we then, from a sort of satiety, and merely because he is present among us, suffer his talents to languish and fade away unhonoured and unadmired? It is surely a very perverse and envious disposition, to look with indifference upon a man worthy of the highest approbation, for no other reason but because we have it in our power to see him, and to converse familiarly with him, and not only to give him our applause, but to receive him into our friendship. Farewell.

### XVII

#### TO CORNELIUS TITIANUS

THE social virtues have not yet quite forsaken the world; and there are still those whose generous affection extends itself even to their departed friends. Titinius Capito has obtained the Emperor's permission to erect a statue in the Forum to the late L. Silanus. It is noble and truly laudable to use princely favour for purposes such as these, and to try the extent of one's interest for the glory of others. It is indeed habitual to Capito to distinguish merit. He has placed in his house (where he is at liberty to do so) the statues of the Bruti, the Cassii, and the Catos, and it is incredible what a religious veneration he pays them. This is not all: there is scarce a name of any note or lustre that he has not celebrated by his excellent verses. One may be very sure a man must be possessed of manifold virtues himself, who thus admires those of others. As Silanus certainly deserves the honour that is done him, so Capito has by this means secured to himself that immortality which

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

suae. Neque enim magis decorum et insigne est statuam in foro populi Romani habere quam ponere. Vale.

### XVIII

*see Index*

C. PLINIUS SUETONIO TRANQUILLO SUO S.

SCRIBIS te perterritum somnio vereri, ne quid adversi in actione patiaris, rogas, ut dilationem petam et pauculos dies, certe proximum, excusem. Difficile est, sed experiar :

*καὶ γὰρ τ' ὄναρ ἐκ Διός ἐστιν.<sup>1</sup>*

Refert tamen, eventura soleas an contraria somniare. Mihi reputanti somnium meum istud, quod times tu, egregiam actionem portendere videtur. Susceperam causam Iuni Pastoris, cum mihi quiescenti visa est socrus mea advolta genibus, ne agerem, obsecrare. Et eram acturus adulescentulus adhuc, eram in quadruplici iudicio, eram contra potentissimos civitatis atque etiam Caesaris amicos; quae singula excutere

<sup>1</sup> *Il. i. 63.*

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<sup>a</sup> *i.e.* the Centumviri, sitting as one court. See i. 5. *n.*



## BOOK I. xvii.—xviii

he has conferred on his friend ; for in my opinion he who erects a statue in the Roman Forum, receives as much glory as the person to whom it is erected. Farewell.

### XVIII

#### TO SUETONIUS TRANQUILLUS

YOUR letter informs me that you are extremely terrified with a dream, as apprehending that it threatens some ill success to you in the cause you have undertaken to defend ; and therefore desire that I would get it adjourned for a few days, or at least to the next. This is a favour, you are sensible, not very easily obtained, but I will use all my interest for that purpose ;

“ For dreams descend from Jove.”

In the mean while it is very material for you to recollect whether your dreams generally represent things as they afterwards fall out, or quite the reverse. But if I may judge of this dream that alarms you by one that happened to myself, it portends you will acquit yourself with great success. I had promised to be counsel for Junius Pastor ; when I fancied in my sleep that my mother-in-law came to me, and throwing herself at my feet, earnestly entreated me not to be concerned in the cause. I was at that time a very young man ; the case was to be argued in the fourfold Court <sup>a</sup> ; my adversaries were some of the most considerable men in Rome, and favourites of Caesar ; any of which circumstances were sufficient, after

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

mentem mihi post tam triste somnium poterant.  
Egi tamen λογισάμενος illud :

Εἰς οἰωνὸς ἄριστος ἀμύνασθαι περὶ πάτρης.<sup>1</sup>

Nam mihi patria, et si quid carius, fides videbatur. Prospere cessit, atque adeo illa actio mihi aures hominum, illa ianuam famae patefecit. Proinde dispice, an tu quoque sub hoc exemplo somnium istud in bonum vertas, aut, si tutius putas illud cautissimi cuiusque praeceptum : ‘ Quod dubites, ne feceris,’ id ipsum rescribe. Ego aliquam stropham inveniam agamque causam tuam, ut ipsam agere tu, cum voles, possis. Est enim sane alia ratio tua, alia mea fuit. Nam iudicium centumvirale differri nullo modo, istud aegre quidem, sed tamen potest. Vale.

## XIX

C. PLINIUS ROMATIO FIRMO SUO S.

MUNICEPS tu meus et condiscipulus et ab ineunte aetate contubernalis, pater tuus et matri et avunculo meo, mihi etiam, quantum aetatis diversitas passa est,

<sup>1</sup> *Il.* xii. 243.

## BOOK I. xviii.-xix

such an inauspicious dream, to have discouraged me. Notwithstanding this, I engaged in the cause, reflecting within myself,

“ Without a sign, his sword the brave man draws,  
And asks no omen, but his country's cause ” :

for I looked upon my faith towards a client to be as precious to me as my country, or, if that were possible, more so. The event happened as I wished ; and it was that very speech which first procured me the favourable attention of the public, and threw open to me the gates of Fame. Consider then whether your dream, judged by this precedent, may not portend success. Or, if you think it more safe to pursue that maxim of the wary : “ never do a thing of which you are in doubt ” : write me word. In the interval I will consider of some expedient, and endeavour your cause shall be heard any day you like best. In this respect you are in a better situation than I was : the court of the Centumviri where I was to plead admits of no adjournment ; whereas in that where your cause is to be heard, though it is not easy to procure one, still however it is possible. Farewell.

## XIX

### TO ROMATIUS FIRMUS

As you are my fellow-townsmen, my school-fellow, and the companion of my earliest youth ; as there was the strictest friendship between my mother and uncle, and your father ; which friendship I also enjoyed as far as the great inequality of our ages would

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

familiaris; magnae et graves causae, cur suscipere et augere dignitatem tuam debeam. Esse autem tibi centum milium censum satis indicat, quod apud nos decurio es. Igitur, ut te non decurione solum, verum etiam equite Romano perfruamur, offero tibi ad implendas equestres facultates trecenta milia nummum. Te memorem huius muneris amicitiae nostrae diuturnitas spondet; ego ne illud quidem admoneo, quod admonere deberem, nisi te scirem sponte facturum, ut dignitate a me data quam modestissime ut a me data utare. Nam sollicitius custodiendus est honor, in quo etiam beneficium amici tuendum est. Vale.

### XX

C. PLINIUS CORNELIO TACITO SUO S.

FREQUENT<sup>a</sup> mihi disputatio est cum quodam docto homine et perito, cui nihil aequae in causis agendis, ut brevitatis, placet. Quam ego custodiendam esse confiteor, si causa permittat; alioqui praevaricatio est transire dicenda, praevaricatio etiam cursim et breviter attingere, quae sint inculcanda, infigenda, repetenda.

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<sup>a</sup> The Equestrian order was constituted on a property valuation, and included all citizens whose fortunes amounted to 400,000 sesterces. The knights ranked midway between

## BOOK I. xix.-xx

admit; it behoves me, for many strong and weighty reasons, to contribute all in my power to the advancement of your dignity. The rank you bear in our province as a local senator is a proof that you are possessed at least of a hundred thousand sesterces; but that we may also have the pleasure of seeing you a Roman knight,<sup>a</sup> give me leave to present you with three hundred thousand, in order to make up the sum requisite to entitle you to that dignity. The length of our friendship leaves me no room to doubt you will ever be forgetful of this service. And I need not advise you (what if I did not know your disposition, I should) to enjoy this honour with the modesty that becomes one who received it from me; for the dignity we possess by the good offices of a friend is to be guarded with peculiar attention, since we must thereby justify his kindness. Farewell.

### XX

#### TO CORNELIUS TACITUS

I HAVE frequent debates with a learned and judicious person of my acquaintance, who admires nothing so much in the eloquence of the bar as conciseness. I admit, where the cause will admit of this manner, it ought to be pursued; but insist, that to omit what is material to be mentioned, or only slightly to touch upon those points which should be repeatedly inculcated, and urged home to the minds of the audience, is, in effect, to betray the cause one has the senators and the common people, but without other distinction than the privilege of wearing a gold ring, the badge of their order.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Nam plerisque longiore tractu vis quaedam et pondus accedit, utque corpori ferrum sic oratio animo non ictu magis quam mora imprimitur. Hic ille mecum auctoritatibus agit ac mihi ex Graecis orationes Lysiae ostentat, ex nostris Gracchorum Catonisque, quorum sane plurimae sunt circumcisae et breves; ego Lysiae Demosthenem, Aeschinem, Hyperidem multosque praeterea, Gracchis et Catoni Pollionem, Caesarem, Coelium, in primis Marcum Tullium op-pono, cuius oratio optima fertur esse quae maxima. Et hercule ut aliae bonae res ita bonus liber melior est quisque quo maior. Vides, ut statuas, signa, picturas, hominum denique multorumque animalium formas, arborum etiam, si modo sint decorae, nihil magis quam amplitudo commendet. Idem orationibus evenit, quin etiam voluminibus ipsis auctoritatem quandam et pulchritudinem adicit magnitudo.

Haec ille multaque alia, quae a me in eandem sententiam solent dici, ut est in disputando incomprehensibilis et lubricus, ita eludit, ut contendat hos ipsos, quorum orationibus nitar, pauciora dixisse, quam ediderint. Ego contra puto. Testes sunt multae multorum orationes et Ciceronis pro Murena, pro Vareno, in quibus brevis et nuda quasi subscriptio quorundam criminum solis titulis indicatur. Ex his

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<sup>a</sup> *Praevaricatio* was the technical term for letting a prosecution fail by collusion with the defence. It was later used also of collusion with the prosecution by defendant's counsel.

<sup>b</sup> *Pro Cluentio*.

undertaken.<sup>a</sup> In many cases a copious manner of expression gives strength and weight to discourse, which frequently makes impressions upon the mind, as iron does upon solid bodies, rather by prolonged than rapid blows. In answer to this he usually has recourse to authorities ; and produces Lysias amongst the Grecians, and Cato and the two Gracchi among our own countrymen, whose speeches certainly afford many instances of the concise style. In return, I name Demosthenes, Aeschines, Hyperides, and many others in opposition to Lysias ; while I confront Cato and the Gracchi with Caesar, Pollio, Coelius, and above all Cicero, whose longest oration<sup>b</sup> is generally esteemed the best. It is in good compositions, as in every thing else that is valuable ; the more there is of them, the better. You may observe in statues, basso-relievos, pictures, and the bodies of men and animals, and even in trees, that nothing is more graceful than magnitude, if accompanied with proportion. The same holds true in speeches ; and even in books, a large volume carries something of beauty and authority in its very size.

My antagonist, who is extremely dexterous at evading an argument, eludes all this, and much more which I usually urge to the same purpose, by insisting that those very persons, upon whose works I found my opinion, made considerable additions to their orations when they published them. This I deny : and appeal to the harangues of numberless orators ; particularly to those of Cicero for Murena and Varenus, where he has given us merely the titles of certain cut-and-dried counts in the indictment. Whence it appears, that many things which he

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

apparet, illum permulta dixisse, cum ederet, omisisse. Idem pro Cluentio ait se totam causam veteri instituto solum perorasse et pro Cornelio quadriduo egisse, ne dubitare possimus, quae per plures dies, ut necesse erat, latius dixerit, postea recisa ac purgata in unum librum grandem quidem, unum tamen coartasse.

At aliud est actio bona, aliud oratio. Scio nonnullis ita videri, sed ego (forsitan fallar) persuasum habeo posse fieri, ut sit actio bona, quae non sit bona oratio, non posse non bonam actionem esse, quae sit bona oratio. Est enim oratio actionis exemplar, et quasi ἀρχέτυπον. Ideo in optima quaque mille figuras extemporales invenimus, in iis etiam, quas tantum editas scimus, ut in Verrem: ‘Artificem quem? quemnam? recte admones; Polyclitum esse dicebant.’ Sequitur ergo, ut actio sit absolutissima, quae maxime orationis similitudinem expresserit, si modo iustum et debitum tempus accipiat; quod si negetur, nulla

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<sup>a</sup> Prosecuted for treason 65 B.C. Cicero's two speeches for him are lost, except a few fragments.



## BOOK I. xx

enlarged upon at the time he delivered those orations, were retrenched when he gave them to the public. The same orator informs us, that, agreeably to the ancient custom (which allowed only one counsel on a side), Cluentius had no other advocate but himself; and tells us farther, that he employed four whole days in defence of Cornelius<sup>a</sup>; leaving us in no doubt that those orations which, when delivered at their full length, had necessarily taken up several days, were greatly pruned and abridged when he afterwards comprised them in a single volume, though I must confess, indeed, a large one.

But, it is objected, there is a wide difference between a good *spoken* and a good *written* oration. This opinion I acknowledge, has had some favourers; nevertheless I am persuaded (though I may perhaps be mistaken) that it is possible a speech may be well received by the audience, which has not merit enough to recommend it to the reader; but an oration which is good on paper cannot be bad when delivered; for the oration on paper is, in truth, the original and model of the speech that is to be pronounced. It is for this reason we find in many of the best orations extant numberless extempore figures of rhetoric; and this even where we are sure they were never spoken at all: as for instance in the following passage from the oration against Verres,—“A certain craftsman—what’s his name? Oh, I’m obliged to you for helping me to it: yes, ’twas Polyclitus.” It follows then, that the nearer approach a pleader makes to a real oration, the more perfect will be his plea; always supposing, however, that he has the necessary indulgence in point of time; for if he be abridged of that, no imputation can justly be fixed

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

oratoris, maxima iudicis culpa est. Adsunt huic opinioni meae leges, quae longissima tempora largiuntur nec brevitatem dicentibus, sed copiam, hoc est diligentiam, suadent; quam praestare nisi in angustissimis causis non potest brevitatis. Adiciam, quod me docuit usus, magister egregius. Frequenter egi, frequenter iudicavi, frequenter in consilio fui. Aliud alios movet, ac plerumque parvae res maximas trahunt. Varia sunt hominum iudicia, variae voluntates. Inde, qui eandem causam simul audierunt, saepe diversum, interdum idem, sed ex diversis animi motibus sentiunt. Praeterea suae quisque inventioni favet et quasi fortissimum complectitur, cum ab alio dictum est, quod ipse praevidit. Omnibus ergo dandum est aliquid, quod teneant, quod agnoscant.

Dixit aliquando mihi Regulus, cum simul adessemus: ‘Tu omnia, quae sunt in causa, putas exsequenda, ego iugulum statim video, hunc premo.’ Premit sane, quod elegit, sed in eligendo frequenterr errat.

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## BOOK I. xx

upon the advocate, though certainly a very great one is chargeable upon the judge. The sense of the laws is, I am sure, on my side, which are by no means chary of the orator's time; it is not brevity, but fulness, in other words, attention to everything material, which they recommend. And how is it possible for an advocate to acquit himself of that duty, unless in the most simple causes, if he affects to be concise? Let me add what experience, that superlative master, has taught me; it has frequently been my province to act as an advocate and as juror, I have often sat as an assessor, and I have ever found that different minds are to be influenced by different applications; and that the slightest circumstances often entail the most important consequences. There is variety in the dispositions and understandings of men, so that they seldom agree in their opinions about any one point in debate before them; or, if they do, it is generally from the movement of different passions. Besides, every man naturally favours his own discoveries, and when he hears an argument made use of which had before occurred to himself, will certainly embrace it as extremely convincing; the orator therefore should so adapt himself to his audience as to throw out something to every one of them, that he may receive and approve as his own peculiar thought.

Once when Regulus and I were counsel together in a cause, he said to me, "you think it necessary to insist upon every point: whereas I mark at once the *throat*, and closely press *that*." ('Tis true he tenaciously holds whatever part he has once fixed upon; but the misfortune is, he is extremely apt to mistake the right place.) I answered, it

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Respondi posse fieri, ut genu esset aut tibia aut talus, ubi ille iugulum putaret. ‘At ego,’ inquam, ‘qui iugulum perspicere non possum, omnia pertempto, omnia experior, πάντα denique λίθον κινῶ.’ Utque in cultura agri non vineas tantum, verum etiam arbusta, nec arbusta tantum, verum etiam campos curo et exerceo, utque in ipsis campis non far aut siliginem solam, sed hordeum, fabam ceteraque legumina sero, sic in actione plura quasi semina latius spargo, ut, quae provenerint, colligam. Neque enim minus inperspicua, incerta, fallaciaque sunt iudicum ingenia quam tempestatum terrarumque. Nec me praeterit summum oratorem Periclem sic a comico Eupolide laudari :

πρὸς δὲ γ’ αὐτοῦ τῷ τάχει  
Πειθὼ τις ἐπεκάθητο τοῖσι χεῖλεσιν.  
Οὕτως ἐκήλει, καὶ μόνος τῶν ῥητόρων  
Τὸ κέντρον ἐγκατέλειπε τοῖς ἀκρωμένοις.<sup>1</sup>

Verum huic ipsi Pericli nec illa πειθὼ nec illud ἐκήλει brevitate vel velocitate vel utraque (differunt enim) sine facultate summa contigisset. Nam delectare, persuadere copiam dicendi spatiumque desiderat; relinquere vero aculeum in audientium animis is demum potest, qui non pungit, sed infigit. Adde, quae de eodem Pericle comicus alter :

Ἦστραπτ’, ἐβρόντα, ξυνεκύκα τὴν Ἑλλάδα.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Eupolis *Δῆμοι* fr. 94.

<sup>2</sup> Aristoph. *Acharn.* 531.

## BOOK I. xx

might possibly happen that what he took for the throat was in reality the knee, shin, or heel. "As for me," said I, "who cannot descry this throat, I attack every part, and push at every opening; in short, I leave no stone unturned." As in agriculture, it is not my vineyards, or my woods, alone, but my fields also that I cultivate; and as I do not sow those fields with only spelt and winter-wheat, but employ also barley, beans, and the other leguminous plants; so in my pleadings at the bar, I spread at large a variety of matter like so many different seeds, in order to reap from thence whatever may happen to sprout; for the disposition of your jurors is as precarious and as little to be ascertained, as that of soils and seasons. I remember the comic writer Eupolis mentions in praise of that excellent orator Pericles, that

"He spake, and straight  
Upon his lips Persuasion sate;  
He only eloquence could find  
That charmed, yet left a sting behind."

But could Pericles, without the richest gifts of expression, and merely by force of the concise or the rapid style, or both together (for they are different), have exerted that *persuasion* and that *charm* of which the poet here speaks? To delight and to persuade requires time, and a great compass of language; while to leave a *sting* in the minds of his audience is an effect not to be achieved by an orator who slightly pushes, but by him, and him only, who thrusts home and deep. Again, another comic poet, speaking of the same orator, says:

"Lightnings and thunders from his mouth he hurled,  
And made a chaos of the Grecian world."

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Non enim amputata oratio et abscisa, sed lata et magnifica et excelsa tonat, fulgurat, omnia denique perturbat ac miscet.

‘Optimus tamen modus est’; quis negat? sed non minus non servat modum, qui infra rem quam qui supra, qui adstrictius quam qui effusius dicit. Itaque audis frequenter ut illud: ‘immodice et redundanter’ ita hoc: ‘ieiune et infirme.’ Alius excessisse materiam, alius dicitur non implesse. Aequae uterque, sed ille imbecillitate, hic viribus peccat; quod certe, etsi non limatioris, maioris tamen ingenii vitium est. Nec vero, cum haec dico, illum Homericum ἀμετροεπή<sup>1</sup> probo, sed hunc:

Καὶ ἔπεα νιφάδεσσιν εἰκότα χειμερίησιν.<sup>2</sup>

non quia non et ille mihi validissime placeat παῦρα μὲν, ἀλλὰ μάλα λιγέως,<sup>3</sup> si tamen detur electio, illam orationem similem nivibus hibernis, id est crebram et adsiduam et largam, postremo divinam et caelestem, volo.

‘At est gratior multis actio brevis.’ Est; sed inertibus, quorum delicias desidiamque quasi iudicium

<sup>1</sup> *Il.* ii. 212.

<sup>2</sup> *Il.* iii. 222.

<sup>3</sup> *Il.* iii. 214.

## BOOK I. xx

For it is not concise and curtailed, it is copious, majestic, and sublime oratory, that with blaze and thunder perturbs and confounds the universe.

The just mean, we all allow, is best ; but he equally deviates from that mean who falls short of it, as he who goes beyond it ; he who confines himself in too narrow a compass, as he who launches out with too great latitude of speech. Hence it is as common to hear our orators condemned for being too barren, as too luxuriant ; for not reaching, as well as for overflowing the bounds of their subject. Both are equally in fault ; but with this difference however, that in the one the fault arises from weakness, in the other from strength ; an error which if it be not a sign of a more correct, yet it is certainly of a more exalted genius. When I say this, I would not be understood to approve that "measureless talker" mentioned in Homer, but that other described in the following lines :

"Frequent and soft as falls the winter snow,  
Thus from his lips the copious periods flow."

Not but I extremely admire him too, of whom the poet says:

"Few were his words, but wonderfully clear."

Yet if I were to choose, I should clearly give the preference to the style resembling *winter snow*, that is, to the full, fluent and diffusive ; in short, to the heavenly and divine.

But ('tis urged) the short harangue is most generally admired. It is so, I confess : but by whom ? By the indolent ; whose lazy caprices it would surely be the highest absurdity to take as a serious

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

respicere ridiculum est. Nam, si hos in consilio habeas, non solum satius est breviter dicere, sed omnino non dicere.

Haec est adhuc sententia mea, quam mutabo, si dissenseris tu; sed plane, cur dissentias, explices rogo. Quamvis enim cedere auctoritati tuae debeam, rectius tamen arbitror in tanta re ratione quam auctoritate superari. Proinde, si non errare videor, id ipsum quam voles brevi epistula, sed tamen scribe (confirmaveris enim iudicium meum); si erravero, longissimam para. Num corrumperis te, qui tibi, si mihi accederes, brevis epistolae necessitatem, si dissentires, longissimae imposui? Vale.

XXI

*ne India*

C. PLINIUS PLINIO PATERNO SUO S.

UT animi tui iudicio sic oculorum plurimum tribuo, non quia multum, ne tibi placeas, sed quia tantum quantum ego sapis; quamquam hoc quoque multum est. Omissis iocis credo decentes esse servos, qui

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## BOOK I. xx.-xxi

verdict. Were you to consult persons of this cast they would tell you, not only that it is best to say little, but that it is best to say nothing.

Thus, my friend, I have laid before you my sentiments upon this subject, which I shall abandon, if I find they are not agreeable to yours. But if you should dissent from me, I beg you would communicate to me your reasons. For though I ought to yield in this case to your authority, yet in a point of such consequence, I hold it more correct to receive my conviction from the force of argument than authority. If you should be of my opinion in this matter, a line or two from you in return, intimating your concurrence, will be sufficient to confirm me in the justness of my sentiments. On the contrary, if you think me mistaken, I beg you would give me your objections at large. Yet has it not, think you, something of the air of bribery, to ask only a short letter if you agree with me; but enjoin you the trouble of a very long one, if you are of a contrary opinion. Farewell.

## XXI

### TO PATERNUS

As I rely very much upon the strength of your judgement, so I do upon the goodness of your eyes: not because I think your discernment very great (for I would not make you vain), but because I think it as good as mine: which, it must be owned, is saying a great deal in its favour. Jestings apart, I like very well the appearance of the slaves which

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

sunt empti mihi ex consilio tuo. Superest, ut frugi sint, quod de venalibus melius auribus quam oculis iudicatur. Vale.

### XXII

C. PLINIUS CATILIO SEVERO SUO S.

DIU iam in urbe haereo et quidem attonitus. Perturbat me longa et pertinax valetudo Titi Aristonis, quem singulariter et miror et diligo. Nihil est enim illo gravius, sanctius, doctius; ut mihi non unus homo, sed litterae ipsae omnesque bonae artes in uno homine summum periculum adire videantur. Quam peritus ille et privati iuris et publici! quantum rerum, quantum exemplorum, quantum antiquitatis tenet! Nihil est, quod doceri<sup>1</sup> velis, quod ille docere non possit; mihi certe, quotiens aliquid abditum quaero, ille thesaurus est. Iam quanta sermonibus eius fides, quanta auctoritas, quam pressa et decora cunctatio! quid est, quod non statim sciat? Et tamen plerumque haesitat, dubitat diversitate rationum, quas acri magnoque iudicio ab origine causisque primis repetit, discernit, expendit. Ad haec quam parcus in victu, quam modicus in cultu! Soleo ipsum cu-

<sup>1</sup> doceri *R Fp*, *Otto*, *Muell.*, discere *M V D a*, *Bip. K*.

## BOOK I. xxi.-xxii

were purchased for me by your recommendation ; all that I want farther, is to be satisfied of their honesty ; a point on which, where slaves are in question, one's ears are better judges than one's eyes. Farewell.

### XXII

#### TO CATILIUS SEVERUS

I AM at present detained in Rome (and have been so a considerable time) under the most alarming apprehensions. Titius Aristo, whom I uncommonly love and esteem, is fallen into a lingering and obstinate illness, which deeply affects me. Virtue, knowledge, and good sense shine out with so superior a lustre in this excellent man that learning herself and every valuable endowment seems involved in the danger of his single person. How consummate is his knowledge both in the political and civil laws of his country ! How thoroughly conversant is he in history, precedents, antiquity ! There is no article, in short, you would wish to be informed of, in which he cannot enlighten you. As for my own part, whenever I would acquaint myself with any abstruse point, I have recourse to him, as to a mine of knowledge. What an amiable sincerity, what a noble dignity is there in his conversation ! How graceful his deliberate concision of utterance ! Though he conceives at once every point in debate, yet his reserve in judgement, deliberately weighing every opposite reason that is offered, traces it, with a most judicious penetration, from its source through all its remotest consequences. His diet is frugal,

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

biculum eius ipsumque lectum ut imaginem quandam priscae frugalitatis aspicere. Ornat haec magnitudo animi, quae nihil ad ostentationem, omnia ad conscientiam refert recteque facti non ex populi sermone mercedem, sed ex facto petit. ) In summa non facile quemquam ex istis, qui sapientiae studium habitu corporis praeferunt, huic viro comparabis. Non quidem gymnasia sectatur aut porticus nec disputationibus longis aliorum otium suumque delectat, sed in toga negotiisque versatur, multos advocazione, plures consilio iuvat. Nemini tamen istorum castitate, pietate, iustitia, fortitudine etiam primo loco cesserit.

Mirareris, si interesses, qua patientia hanc ipsam valetudinem toleret, ut dolori resistat, ut sitim differat, ut incredibilem febrium ardorem immotus opertusque transmittat. Nuper me paucosque mecum, quos maxime diligit, advocavit rogavitque, ut medicos consuleremus de summa valetudinis, ut, si esset insuperabilis, sponte exiret e vita, si tantum difficilis et longa, resisteret maneretque; dandum enim precibus uxoris, dandum filiae lacrimis, dandum etiam nobis amicis, ne spes nostras, si modo non essent inanes, voluntaria morte desereret. Id ego arduum in primis et praecipua laude dignum puto.

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## BOOK I. xxii

his dress plain; and his very chamber and bed, whenever I view them, present me with a kind of picture of ancient simplicity. To all this, his illustrious mind reflects the noblest ornament; he places no part of his happiness in ostentation, but refers the whole of it to conscience; and seeks the reward of a virtuous action, not in the applauses of the world, but in the action itself. In short, you will not easily find his equal even among the tribe who claim the title, by assuming the guise, of philosophers. He frequents not the places of public resort, nor idly amuses himself and others with endless controversies. *His* talents are exerted as a pleader in the scenes of civil and active life. Many has he assisted as an advocate, still more as an adviser; and with all this, in the practice of temperance, piety, justice, and fortitude he has no superior among your professed moralists.

It would astonish you to witness with what patience he bears this illness; how he struggles with pain, endures thirst, and quietly submits to lie covered up, though burning with fever. He lately called me and a few more of his particular friends, to his bed-side and begged we would ask his physicians what turn they apprehended his distemper would take; that if they pronounced it incurable, he might voluntarily put an end to his life; but if there were hopes of a recovery, however tedious and difficult, he might hold out with patience; for so much, he thought, was due to the entreaties of his wife, the tears of his daughter, and also to the affection of his friends, as not to betray our hopes, if in truth they were not entirely desperate, by committing suicide. A resolution this, in my estimation, truly arduous, and worthy of the

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Nam impetu quodam et instinctu procurrere ad mortem commune cum multis, deliberare vero et causas eius expendere, utque suaserit ratio, vitae mortisque consilium vel suscipere vel ponere ingentis est animi. Et medici quidem secunda nobis pollicentur; superest, ut promissis deus adnuat tandemque me hac sollicitudine exsolvat; qua liberatus Laurentinum meum, hoc est libellos et pugillares studiosumque otium, repetam. Nunc enim nihil legere, nihil scribere aut adsidenti vacat aut anxio libet. Habes, quid timeam, quid optem, quid etiam in posterum destinem; tu quid egeris, quid agas, quid velis agere, invicem nobis, sed laetioribus epistulis scribe. Erit confusioni meae non mediocre solatium, si tu nihil quereris. Vale.

### XXIII

*see Index*  
C. PLINIUS POMPEIO FALCONI SUO S.

CONSULIS, an existimem te in tribunatu causas agere debere. Plurimum refert, quid esse tribunatum putes, inanem umbram et sine honore nomen an potestatem sacrosanctam, et quam in ordinem

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## BOOK I. xxii.—xxiii

highest applause. Instances are frequent enough in the world of rushing into the arms of death without reflection, and by a sort of blind impulse : but calmly and deliberately to weigh the motives for life or death, and to be determined in our choice as reason counsels, is the mark of an uncommon and great mind. We have had the satisfaction of the opinion of his physicians in his favour ; and may heaven confirm their assurances, and free me from this restless anxiety ! If that should happily be the event, I shall immediately return to my favourite Laurentinum, or, in other words, to my books and studious leisure. At present, so much of my time and thoughts is employed in attendance upon my friend, and in my apprehensions for him, that I have neither leisure nor inclination to read or write anything. Thus have I informed you of my fears, my hopes, and my intentions. Communicate to me, in your turn, but in a gayer style, an account not only of what you are and have been doing, but even of your future designs. It will be a very sensible consolation to me in this perplexity of mind, to be assured that yours is easy. Farewell.

### XXIII

#### TO POMPEIUS FALCO

YOU desire my opinion whether you can with propriety act as an advocate during your Tribunate ? But before I determine that question, I must know what are your sentiments of that office ; whether you look upon it as a mere shadow of honour, and an empty title, or as a sacred and inviolable function,

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

cogi ut a nullo ita ne a se quidem deceat. Ipse cum tribunus essem, erraverim fortasse, qui me esse aliquid putavi, sed, tamquam essem, abstinui causis agendis; primum, quod deforme arbitrabar, cui adsurgere, cui loco cedere omnes oporteret, hunc omnibus sedentibus stare, et, qui iubere posset tacere quemcumque, huic silentium clepsydra indici, et, quem interfari nefas esset, hunc etiam convicia audire et, si inulta pateretur, inertem, si ulcisceretur, insolentem videri. Erat hic quoque aestus ante oculos, si forte me appellasset vel ille, cui adessem, vel ille, quem contra, intercederem et auxilium ferrem an quiescerem sileremque et quasi eiurato magistratu privatum ipse me facerem. His rationibus motus malui me tribunum omnibus exhibere quam paucis advocatum. Sed tu (iterum dicam) plurimum interest quid esse tribunatum putes, quam personam tibi imponas; quae sapienti viro ita aptanda est, ut perferatur. Vale.

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<sup>a</sup> *In ordinem cogi*, lit. "to reduce to the ranks."



which as no one may set at nought,<sup>a</sup> so neither ought the person himself who is invested with it? When I was myself in that post (possibly I might be mistaken in supposing I was become of any importance, however upon the supposition that I really was) I entirely quitted the bar. I thought it unbecoming a magistrate, who, upon all occasions, had a right of precedency, and in whose presence every body is obliged to rise, to be seen standing, while all about him were seated; that he who has authority to impose silence on any man, should himself be silent when the clock directs:<sup>b</sup> that he whom it is held impious to interrupt, should be exposed to the scurrilous liberties of bar orators; which to chastize, would be thought a sort of insolence of office, and yet it would be weakness to overlook. I considered farther, the great difficulty I should be under, if either party to a suit should happen to appeal to me as Tribune, whether to interpose my authority to protect him, or as it were resign my office, and reduce myself to the status of a private citizen by preserving a passive silence. For these reasons I rather chose to appear as the Tribune of all, than the advocate of a few. But with respect to you (I repeat it again), the whole depends upon what your sentiments are of this office, and in what part you would choose to appear; remembering always that a wise man will take upon himself such only as he is capable of sustaining throughout the play.

<sup>a</sup> Alluding to the time-limit imposed on advocates' speeches. Cf. ii. 11. n. (p. 128).

# THE LETTERS OF PLINY

## XXIV

C. PLINIUS BAEBIO HISPANO SUO S.

TRANQUILLUS, contubernalis meus, vult emere agellum, quem venditare amicus tuus dicitur. Rogo cures, quanti aequum est, emat ; ita enim delectabit emisse. Nam mala emptio semper ingrata est eo maxime, quod exprobrare stultitiam domino videtur. In hoc autem agello, si modo adriserit pretium, Tranquilli mei stomachum multa sollicitant, vicinitas urbis, opportunitas viae, mediocritas villae, modus ruris, qui avocet magis quam distingat. Scholasticis porro dominis, ut hic est, sufficit abunde tantum soli, ut relevare caput, reficere oculos, reptare per limitem unamque semitam terere omnesque viticulas suas nosse et numerare arbusculas possint. Haec tibi exposui, quo magis scires, quantum ille esset mihi, ego tibi debiturus, si praediolum istud, quod commendatur his dotibus, tam salubriter emerit, ut poenitentiae locum non relinquat. Vale.

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## XXIV

To BAEBIUS

My friend Tranquillus has an inclination to purchase a small farm, of which, as I am informed, an acquaintance of yours intends to dispose. I beg you would endeavour he may have it upon reasonable terms : a circumstance which will add to his satisfaction in obtaining it. A dear bargain is always disagreeable, particularly as it is a reflection upon the purchaser's judgement. There are several circumstances attending this little farm, which (supposing my friend had no objection to the price) are appetising to his palate : the convenient distance from Rome, the goodness of the roads, the smallness of the building, and the very few acres of land around it, which is just enough to amuse but not employ him. To a man of the studious turn that Tranquillus is, it is sufficient if he has but a small spot to relieve the mind and divert the eye, where he may saunter round his grounds, traverse his single walk, grow familiar with his two or three vines, and count his little plantations. I mention these particulars, to let you see how much he will be obliged to me, as I shall to you, if you can help him to the purchase of this little *box*, so agreeable to his taste, upon terms of which he shall have no occasion to repent. Farewell.



## BOOK II

## LIBER SECUNDUS

### I

C. PLINIUS ROMANO SUO S.

*see Index* Post aliquot annos insigne atque etiam memorabile populi Romani oculis spectaculum exhibuit publicum funus Vergini Rufi, maximi et clarissimi civis, perinde felicitis. Triginta annis gloriae suae supervixit; legit scripta de se carmina, legit historias et posteritati suae interfuit. Perfunctus est tertio consulatu, ut summum fastigium privati hominis impleret, cum principis nolisset. Caesares, quibus suspectus atque etiam invisus virtutibus fuerat, evasit, reliquit incolumem optimum atque amicissimum, tamquam ad hunc ipsum honorem publici funeris reservatus. Annum tertium et octogensimum excessit in altissima tranquillitate, pari veneratione. Usus est firma valetudine, nisi quod solebant ei manus tremere, citra dolorem tamen. Aditus tantum mortis durior longiorque, sed hic ipse laudabilis. Nam cum vocem praepararet acturus in

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<sup>a</sup> i.e. Nerva.

## BOOK II

### I

#### TO VOCONIUS ROMANUS

ROME has not for many years beheld so striking and memorable a spectacle as was lately exhibited in the public funeral of Virginius Rufus, one of her greatest citizens, and no less fortunate than illustrious. For he lived thirty years after achieving fame, he read his actions in the pages of poets and historians, and thus made one among his survivors. He was thrice raised to the dignity of Consul, that he who refused to be the first of princes, might at least be the highest of subjects. He escaped the resentment of those emperors to whom his virtues had rendered him suspect, and even odious, and left the best, the most amicable of princes<sup>a</sup> firmly seated on the throne, as if providence had purposely preserved him to receive the honour of this public funeral. He arrived, in full tranquillity and universally revered, to the eighty-fourth year of his age, still enjoying robust health, excepting only a paralytic disorder in his hands, which however was attended with no pain. His passage to death, alone, was severe and tedious; but even this was matter for praise. As he was rehearsing his speech of thanks to the Emperor, who had raised him to the consulship, a

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

consulatu principi gratias, liber, quem forte acceperat grandiozem, et seni et stanti ipso pondere elapsus est. Hunc dum consequitur colligitque, per leve et lubricum pavementum fallente vestigio cecidit coxamque fregit, quae parum apte collocata reluctante aetate male coit.

Huius viri exequiae magnum ornamentum principi, magnum saeculo, magnum etiam foro et rostris attulerunt. Laudatus est a consule Cornelio Tacito; nam hic supremus felicitati eius cumulus accessit, laudator eloquentissimus. Et ille quidem plenus annis abiit, plenus honoribus, illis etiam, quos recusavit; nobis tamen quaerendus ac desiderandus est ut exemplar aevi prioris, mihi vero praecipue, qui illum non solum publice, sed etiam privatim quantum admirabar tantum diligebam; primum quod utrique eadem regio, municipia finitima, agri etiam possessionesque coniunctae, praeterea quod ille tutor mihi relictus adfectum parentis exhibuit. Sic candidatum me suffragio ornavit, sic ad omnes honores meos ex secessibus accucurrit, cum iam pridem eiusmodi officiis renuntiasset, sic illo die, quo sacerdotes solent nominare, quos dignissimos sacerdotio iudicant, me semper nominabat. Quin etiam in hac novissima

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<sup>a</sup> i.e. "members of one of the four great priestly colleges, pontifices, augures, quindecimviri sacris faciundis, septemviri epulonum." (Merrill.)



## BOOK II. i

volume, which chanced to be inconveniently large for him to hold, escaped by its sheer weight the grasp that age and his upright posture doubly enfeebled. In hastily endeavouring to recover it, he missed his footing on the smooth slippery pavement; fell down, and broke his hip-bone; which fracture, as it was unskilfully set at first, and having besides the infirmities of age to contend with, could never be brought to unite again.

The funeral obsequies paid to the memory of this great man have done honour to the Emperor, to the present age, and also to Eloquence herself. The consul Cornelius Tacitus pronounced his funeral oration: for the series of his felicities was crowned by the applause of the most eloquent of orators. He died full of years and of glory, as illustrious by the honours he refused, as by those he accepted. Still, however, he will be missed and lamented by us, as the bright model of a bygone age; especially by myself, who not only admired him as a patriot, but loved him as a friend. We were not only natives of the same province, and of neighbouring towns, but our estates were contiguous. Besides, he was also left guardian to me, and treated me with the affection of a parent. Whenever I offered myself a candidate for any employment, he constantly honoured me with his support; though he had long since renounced friendly services of this nature, he would always hasten from his rural retirement to attend my formal entry upon an office. At the time when it is customary for the priests<sup>a</sup> to nominate such as they judge worthy to be received into their sacred office, he constantly proposed me. Even in his last sickness, being apprehensive he might

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

valetudine veritus, ne forte inter quinqueviros crearetur, qui minuendis publicis sumptibus iudicio senatus constituebantur, cum illi tot amici senes consularesque superessent, me huius aetatis, per quem excusaretur, elegit his quidem verbis : ‘ Etiam si filium haberem, tibi mandarem.’

Quibus ex causis necesse est tamquam immaturam mortem eius in sinu tuo defleam, si tamen fas est aut flere aut omnino mortem vocare, qua tanti viri mortalitas magis finita quam vita est. Vivit enim vivetque semper atque etiam latius in memoria hominum et sermone versabitur, postquam ab oculis recessit.

Volui tibi multa alia scribere, sed totus animus in hac una contemplatione defixus est. Verginium cogito, Verginium video, Verginium iam vanis imaginibus, recentibus tamen, audio, adloquor, teneo ; cui fortasse cives aliquos virtutibus pares et habemus et habebimus, gloria neminem. Vale.

## II

### C. PLINIUS PAULINO SUO S.

IRASCOR, nec liquet mihi, an debeam, sed irascor. Scis, quam sit amor iniquus interdum, impotens

## BOOK II. i.-ii

be named one of the five commissioners appointed by the senate to reduce the public expenses, he fixed upon me, young as I am, to carry his excuses, in preference to so many other friends of superior age and dignity; and in a very obliging manner assured me, that had he a son of his own, he would nevertheless have employed me in that office.

Thus I am constrained to lament his death, as if it were immature, and pour out the fullness of my grief in the bosom of my friend; if indeed it be permissible to grieve at all upon this occasion, or to call that event *death*, which to *such* a man, is rather to be looked upon as the period of his mortality than of his life. For he lives, and will continue to live for ever; and his fame will be spread farther by the recollection and the tongues of men now that he is removed from their sight.

I had many other things to write to you, but my mind is so entirely taken up with this subject, that I cannot call it off to any other. Virginius is constantly in my thoughts; the vain but lively impressions of him are continually before my eyes, and I am for ever fondly imagining that I hear him, converse with him, and embrace him. There are, perhaps, and possibly hereafter will be, some few Romans who may rival him in virtue; but not one, I am persuaded, that will ever equal him in glory. Farewell.

### II

#### TO PAULINUS

WHETHER I have reason for my rage is not quite so clear; however, wondrous angry I am. But love, you know, will sometimes be irrational; as it is

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

saepe, μικραίτιος semper. Haec tamen causa magna est, nescio an iusta; sed ego, tamquam non minus iusta quam magna sit, graviter irascor, quod a te tam diu litterae nullae. Exorare me potes uno modo, si nunc saltem plurimas et longissimas miseris. Haec mihi sola excusatio vera, ceterae falsae videbuntur. Non sum auditurus: 'Non eram Romae' vel: 'Occupator eram'; illud enim nec di sinant, ut 'infirmior.' Ipse ad villam partim studiis, partim desidia fruor, quorum utrumque ex otio nascitur. Vale.

### III

#### C. PLINIUS NEPOTI SUO S.

MAGNA Isaeum fama praecesserat, maior inventus est. Summa est facultas, copia, ubertas; dicit semper ex tempore, sed tamquam diu scripserit. Sermo Graecus, immo Atticus, praefationes tersae, graciles, dulces, graves interdum et erectae. Poscit controversias plures, electionem auditoribus permittit, saepe etiam partes, surgit, amicitur, incipit; statim omnia ac paene pariter ad manum, sensus reconditi occursant,

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<sup>a</sup> Juvenal mentions this rhetorician as a powerful speaker (iii. 74).

often ungovernable, and ever jealous. The occasion of this my formidable wrath is great, and I think, just: however, taking it for granted that there is as much truth, as weight in it, I am most vehemently enraged at your long silence. Would you soften my resentment? Let your letters for the future be very frequent, and very long; I shall excuse you upon no other terms; and as absence from Rome, or press of business, is a plea I can by no means admit; so that of ill health, the Gods, I hope, will not suffer you to allege. As for myself, I am enjoying at my villa the alternate pleasures of study and indolence; those happy privileges of retired leisure! Farewell.

### III

#### TO NEPOS

WE had received very advantageous accounts of Isaeus,<sup>a</sup> before his arrival here; but he is superior to all that was reported of him. He possesses the utmost facility and copiousness of expression, and though always extempore his discourses have all the propriety and elegance of the most studied and elaborate composition. He employs the Greek language, or rather the genuine Attic. His prefatory remarks are terse, easy, and harmonious; and, when occasion requires, serious and majestic. He proposes several questions for discussion, gives his audience liberty to call for any they please, and sometimes even to name what side of it he shall take; when immediately he rises up, assumes his gown, and begins. He handles every point with almost equal readiness; profound ideas occur to him

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY .

verba, sed qualia ! quaesita et exulta. Multa lectio in subitis, multa scriptio elucet. Prooemiatur apte, narrat aperte, pugnat acriter, colligit fortiter, ornat excelse, postremo docet, delectat, adficit, quid maxime, dubites ; crebra ἐνθυμήματα, crebri syllogismi, circumscripti et effecti, quod stilo quoque asequi magnum est, incredibilis memoria, repetit altius, quae dixit ex tempore, ne verbo quidem labitur. Ad tantam ἐξὶν studio et exercitatione pervenit ; nam diebus et noctibus nihil aliud agit, nihil audit, nihil loquitur.

Annum sexagensimum excessit et adhuc scholasticus tantum est ; quo genere hominum nihil aut simplicius aut sincerius aut melius. Nos enim, qui in foro verisque litibus terimur, multum malitiae, quamvis nolumus, addiscimus ; schola et auditorium et ficta causa res inermis, innoxia est nec minus felix, senibus praesertim. Nam quid in senectute felicius quam quod dulcissimum est in iuventa ? Quare ego Isaeum non disertissimum tantum, verum etiam beatissimum

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## BOOK II. iii

as he proceeds ; his language—but how admirable that is ! So choice, so refined ! These unprepared discourses plainly discover he has been very conversant in the best authors, and much accustomed to compose himself. He opens his subject with great propriety ; his narration is clear ; his controversy ingenious, his logic forcible and his rhetoric sublime. In a word, he at once instructs, entertains, and affects you, and each in so high a degree, that you are at a loss to determine in which of those talents he most excels. He abounds in enthymemes and syllogisms ; the latter of a formal exactness, not very easy to attain even in writing. His memory is so extraordinary, that he can recollect what he has before spoke extempore, word for word. This wonderful habitude he has acquired by great application and practice ; for his whole time is so devoted to subjects of this nature, that he thinks, hears, and talks of nothing else.

Though he is above sixty-three years of age, he still chooses to continue a mere professor of rhetoric ; than which class none abounds with men of more worth, simplicity, and integrity. We, who are conversant in the real contentions of the bar, unavoidably contract a good deal of *finesse*, however contrary to our natural tempers. But the lecture-room, the audience-hall, the mock trial at law afford an employment as innocent as it is felicitous, particularly so for those who are advanced in years ; as nothing can give more felicity at that period of life, than to enjoy what were the most pleasing entertainments of our youth. I look therefore upon Isaëus, not only as the most eloquent, but the most happy of men ; as I shall esteem you the most

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

iudico ; quem tu nisi cognoscere concupiscis, ~~sax~~ <sup>axeus</sup> ferreusque es. Proinde, si non ob alia nosque ipsos, at certe ut hunc audias, veni.

Numquamne legisti Gaditanum quendam Titi Livi nomine gloriaque commotum ad visendum eum ab ultimo terrarum orbe venisse statimque, ut viderat, abisse? Ἀφιλόκαλον, illiteratum, iners ac paene etiam turpe est non putare tanti cognitionem, qua nulla est iucundior, nulla pulchrior, nulla denique humanior. Dices: 'Habeo hic, quos legam, non minus disertos.' Etiam: sed legendi semper occasio est, audiendi non semper. Praeterea multo magis, ut vulgo dicitur, viva vox adficit. Nam, licet acriora sint, quae legas, altius tamen in animo sedent, quae pronuntiatio, vultus, habitus, gestus etiam dicentis adfigit; nisi vero falsum putamus illud Aeschinis, qui cum legisset Rhodiis orationem Demosthenis admirantibus cunctis adiecisse fertur: Τί δέ, εἰ αὐτοῦ τοῦ θηρίου, [τὰ αὐτοῦ ῥήματα βοῶντος] ἠκούσατε; et erat Aeschines, si Demostheni credimus, μεγαλοφωνότατος. Fatebatur tamen longe melius eadem illa pronuntiasse ipsum, qui pepererat.



## BOOK II. iii

insensible, if you appear to slight his acquaintance. Let me prevail with you then to come to Rome, if not upon my account, or any other, at least for the pleasure of hearing this extraordinary person.

You have surely read of a certain inhabitant of the city of Cadiz, who was so struck with the illustrious character of Livy, that he travelled from the ends of the earth on purpose to see that great genius; and, as soon as he had satisfied his curiosity, returned home again? A man must have a very inelegant, illiterate, and indolent (I had almost said a very mean) turn of mind, not to think whatever relates to a science so entertaining, so noble, and so polite, worthy of his curiosity. You will tell me, perhaps, you have authors in your own library equally eloquent. I allow it; and those authors you may turn over at any time, but you cannot always have an opportunity of hearing Isaeus. Besides, as the common saying has it, far more affecting is the spoken word. There is something in the voice, the countenance, the bearing, and the gesture of the speaker, that concur in fixing an impression upon the mind, deeper than can even vigorous writings. This at least was the opinion of Aeschines, who, having read to the Rhodians a speech of Demosthenes, which they loudly applauded; "but how," said he, "would you have been affected, had you heard the wild beast's own roar!" Aeschines, if we may believe Demosthenes, had great pomp and energy of elocution; yet, you see, he could not but confess it would have been a considerable advantage to the oration if it had been pronounced by the author himself. What I aim at

for

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Quae omnia huc tendunt, ut audias Isaeum, vel ideo tantum, ut audieris. Vale.

### IV

C. PLINIUS CALVINAЕ SUAE S.

Si pluribus pater tuus vel unicuilibet alii quam mihi debuisset, fuisset fortasse dubitandum, an adires hereditatem etiam viro gravem. Cum vero ego adductus adfinitatis officio dimissis omnibus, qui, non dico molestiores, sed diligentiores erant, creditor solus exstiterim, cumque ego nubenti tibi in dotem centum milia contulerim praeter eam summam, quam pater tuus quasi de meo dixit (erat enim solvenda de meo), magnum habes facilitatis meae pignus, cuius fiducia debes famam defuncti pudoremque suscipere; ad quod ne te verbis magis quam rebus horter, quidquid mihi pater tuus debuit, acceptum tibi ferri iubeo.

## BOOK II. iii.-iv

by this, is, to persuade you to come and hear Isaeus ; and let me again entreat you to do so, if for no other reason, at least that you may have the pleasure to say you once heard him. Farewell.

### IV

#### TO CALVINA

IF your father had left several creditors, or indeed a single one except myself, you might justly, perhaps, scruple to enter upon his estate, which, with such encumbrances, might prove a burden too heavy even for one of our sex to undertake. But since, out of regard to the affinity that subsisted between us, I was contented to remain the only person unsatisfied who had any demand upon the estate, while other creditors, I will not say more troublesome, but certainly more cautious, were paid off ; and as I contributed, you may remember, 100,000 sesterces towards your marriage portion, over and above the sum your father charged upon this estate for your fortune, which may be esteemed my gift too, as it was to be paid out of a fund which was before appropriated to me—when you consider, I say, these instances of my friendship, you can want no assurance of my favourable disposition towards you. In confidence of which, you should not scruple to enter upon this inheritance, and by that means protect the memory of your father from the reproach of his dying insolvent. But that I may give you a more substantial encouragement to do so, than mere words, I entirely acquit you of the debt which he owed me.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Nec est, quod verearis, ne sit mihi onerosa ista donatio. Sunt quidem omnino nobis modicae facultates, dignitas sumptuosa, reditus propter conditionem agellorum nescio minor an incertior; sed, quod cessat ex reditu, frugalitate suppletur, ex qua velut e fonte liberalitas nostra decurrit; quae tamen ita temperanda est, ne nimia profusione inarescat, sed temperanda in aliis, in te vero facile ratio constabit, etiamsi modum excesserit. Vale.

### V

C. PLINIUS LUPERCO SUO S.

ACTIONEM et a te frequenter efflagitatam et a me saepe promissam exhibui tibi, non tamen totam; adhuc enim pars eius perpolitur. Interim, quae absolutiora mihi videbantur, non fuit alienum iudicio tuo tradi. His tu rogo intentionem scribentis accommodes. Nihil enim adhuc inter manus habui, cui maiorem sollicitudinem praestare deberem. Nam in ceteris actionibus existimationi hominum diligentia tantum et fides nostra, in hac etiam pietas subicietur. Inde et liber crevit, dum ornare patriam et amplificare gaudemus, pariterque et defensionis eius servimus et gloriae. Tu tamen haec ipsa, quantum ratio

## BOOK II. iv.-v

Do not scruple to receive this present at my hands, upon the supposition that I can ill spare so large a sum. It is true, my fortune is but moderate: the expenses which my station in the world requires are considerable; while the yearly income of my estate, from the nature and circumstances of it, is as uncertain as it is small; yet what I want in revenue, I make up by economy, the fountain, so to speak, that supplies my bounty. I must be cautious, no doubt, not to exhaust it by too much profusion; but that is a caution which I shall observe towards others; with respect to yourself, my accounts will readily tally, though it should exceed bounds. Farewell.

### V

#### TO LUPERCUS

I SEND you at last the piece you have so often desired, and which I have as frequently promised: but it is part of it only; the remainder I am still polishing. In the meanwhile I thought there would be no impropriety in laying before you such parts as seemed to me most correct. I beg you would read it with the same close attention that I wrote it; for I never was engaged in any work that required so much care. In my other speeches, my diligence and integrity only, in this, my patriotism also, will be submitted to the judgement of the world. Hence while I dwelt with pleasure upon the honour of my native country, and endeavoured not only to support its rights, but heighten its glory; my oration swelled insensibly. However, I beg you would curtail

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

exegerit, resecā. Quotiens enim ad fastidium legentium deliciasque respicio, intellego nobis commendationem ex ipsa mediocritate libri petendam.

Idem tamen, qui a te hanc austeritatem exigo, cogor id, quod diversum est, postulare, ut in plerisque frontem remittas. Sunt enim quaedam adulescentium auribus danda, praesertim si materia non refragetur; nam descriptiones locorum, quae in hoc libro frequentiores erunt, non historice tantum, sed prope poëtice prosecui fas est. Quod tamen si quis extiterit qui putet nos lautius fecisse, quam orationis severitas exigat, huius, ut ita dixerim, tristitiam reliquae partes actionis exorare debebunt. Adnisi certe sumus, ut quamlibet diversa genera lectorum per plures dicendi species teneremus, ac, sicut veremur, ne quibusdam pars aliqua secundum suam cuiusque naturam non probetur, ita videmur posse confidere, ut universitatem omnibus varietas ipsa commendet. Nam et in ratione conviviorum, quamvis a plerisque cibus singuli temperemus, totam tamen cenam laudare omnes solemus, nec ea, quae stomachus noster recusat, adimunt gratiam illis, quibus capitur. Atque haec ego sic accipi volo, non tamquam adsecutum me esse credam, sed tamquam adsequi laboraverim, fortasse non frustra, si modo tu curam tuam admoveris interim istis, mox iis, quae sequentur.

## BOOK II. v

it, even in those favourite topics, wherever you find reason to do so; for when I consider the affected niceness of readers, I am sensible the surest recommendation I can have to their favour is by the moderate length of my book.

But while I demand your severity in this instance, I am obliged, contrariwise to beg your leniency in many others. Some consideration ought to be had to the taste of young people, especially where the subject admits of it; for instance, the descriptions of places, occur frequently in this performance; and these it is allowable to treat not only in historical but in almost poetic style. If any critic should happen to consider these passages too florid for the gravity of such an oration, the other parts of it ought to appease his moroseness if I may use that expression. I have, indeed, endeavoured to gain attention from readers of the most opposite tastes by employing several styles; and though I am afraid there are some passages that will displease particular persons, as not falling in with their peculiar taste; yet, its mere variety, one may fairly hope, will recommend the work as a whole. For in matters culinary, though we do not severally partake of every dish, yet we admire the general disposition of a dinner; and if we happen to meet with something not to our palate, we are not the less pleased, however, with what is. I would not be understood to mean that I have actually furnished out such an entertainment; but only that I have attempted to do so. And possibly my attempt may not prove altogether fruitless, if you will exercise your skill upon what I now send you, and shall hereafter send.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Dices te non posse satis diligenter id facere, nisi prius totam actionem cognoveris. Fateor: in praesentia tamen et ista tibi familiariora fient, et quaedam ex his talia erunt, ut per partes emendari possint. Etenim, si avulsum statuae caput aut membrum aliquod inspiceres, non tu quidem ex illo posses congruentiam aequalitatemque deprendere, posses tamen iudicare, an id ipsum satis elegans esset; nec alia ex causa principiorum libri circumferuntur, quam quia existimatur pars aliqua etiam sine ceteris esse perfecta.

Longius me provexit dulcedo quaedam tecum loquendi; sed iam finem faciam, ne modum, quem etiam orationi adhibendum puto, in epistula excedam. Vale.

### VI

C. PLINIUS AVITO SUO S.

LONGUM est altius repetere, nec refert, quemadmodum acciderit, ut homo minime familiaris cenarem apud quendam, ut sibi videbatur, lautum et diligentem, ut mihi, sordidum simul et sumptuosum. Nam sibi et paucis optima quaedam, ceteris vilia et minuta

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## BOOK II. v.-vi

You will tell me, I know, that you cannot do so with proper accuracy till you are acquainted with the whole speech. There is truth in this, I confess: however, for the present you may better acquaint yourself with this detached part, wherein you will find some things, perhaps, that will bear piecemeal correction. If you were to examine the detached head, or any other part of a statue, though you could not thereby apprehend the harmony and just proportions of the entire figure, yet you would be able to judge of the elegance of that particular member. From what other principle is it that specimens of books are handed about, but that it is supposed the beauties of particular parts may be seen, without taking a view of the whole?

A sort of pleasant notion that I am talking with you has carried me a greater length than I intended. But I stop here; for it is not reasonable that I, who am for setting bounds even to a speech, should set none to a letter. Farewell.

### VI

#### TO AVITUS

It would be a long story, and of no importance, were I to recount too particularly by what accident I (who am not at all fond of society) supped lately with a person, who in his own opinion lives in splendour combined with economy; but according to mine, in a sordid but expensive manner. Some very elegant dishes were served up to himself and a few more of the company; while those which were placed before the rest were cheap and paltry. He

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

ponebat. Vinum etiam parvulis lagunculis in tria genera discripserat, non ut potestas eligendi, sed ne ius esset recusandi, aliud sibi et nobis, aliud minoribus amicis (nam gradatim amicos habet), aliud suis nostrisque libertis. Animadvertit, qui mihi proximus recumbebat, et, an probarem, interrogavit. Negavi. 'Tu ergo,' inquit, 'quam consuetudinem sequeris?' 'Eadem omnibus pono; ad cenam enim, non ad notam invito cunctisque rebus exaequo, quos mensa et toro aequavi.' 'Etiamne libertos?' 'Etiam; convictores enim tunc, non libertos puto.' Et ille: 'Magno tibi constat.' 'Minime.' 'Qui fieri potest?' 'Quia scilicet liberti mei non idem quod ego bibunt, sed idem ego quod liberti.'

Et hercule, si gulae temperes, non est onerosum, quo utaris, ipse communicare cum pluribus. Illa ergo reprimenda, illa quasi in ordinem redigenda est, si sumptibus parcas, quibus aliquanto rectius tua continentia quam aliena contumelia consulas.

Quorsum haec? ne tibi, optimae indolis iuveni,

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<sup>a</sup> i.e. not to be "marked" as socially inferior. Allusion to the mark (*nota*) which the Censors affixed to names of expelled members in the list of the Senate.

<sup>b</sup> Lit. "reduce to the ranks."

## BOOK II. vi

had apportioned in small flagons three different sorts of wine ; but you are not to suppose it was that the guests might take their choice : on the contrary, that they might not choose at all. One was for himself and me ; the next for his friends of a lower order (for, you must know, he measures out his friendship according to the degrees of quality) ; and the third for his own freed-men and mine. One who sat next me took notice of this, and asked me if I approved of it. "Not at all," I told him. "Pray, then," said he, "what is your method on such occasions ?" "Mine," I returned, "is, to give all my company the same fare ; for when I make an invitation, it is to sup, not to be censored.<sup>a</sup> Every man whom I have placed on an equality with myself by admitting him to my table, I treat as an equal in all particulars." "Even freed-men ?" he asked. "Even them," I said ; "for on these occasions I regard them not as freed-men, but boon companions." "This must put you to great expense," says he. I assured him not at all ; and on his asking how that could be, I said "Why you must know my freed-men don't drink the same wine I do—but *I* drink what *they* do."

And certainly if a man is wise enough to moderate his own gluttony, he will not find it so very chargeable a thing to entertain all his visitors in general as he does himself. Restrain and, so to speak, humble<sup>b</sup> that failing, if you would be an economist in good earnest. (You will find your own temperance a much better method of saving expenses, than affronts to other people.) *I excite!*

What is my drift in all this, do you ask ? Why to hinder a young man of your excellent dis-

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

quorundam in mensa luxuria specie frugalitatis imponat. Convenit autem amori in te meo, quotiens tale aliquid inciderit, sub exemplo praemonere, quid debeas fugere. Igitur memento nihil magis esse vitandum quam istam luxuriae et sordium novam societatem; quae cum sint turpissima discreta ac separata, turpius iunguntur. Vale.

### VII

C. PLINIUS MACRINO SUO S.

HERI a senatu Vestricio Spurinnae principe auctore triumphalis statua decreta est, non ita ut multis, qui numquam in acie steterunt, numquam castra viderunt, numquam denique tubarum sonum nisi in spectaculis audierunt, verum ut illis, qui decus istud sudore et sanguine et factis adsequebantur. Nam Spurinna Bructerum regem vi et armis induxit in regnum ostentatoque bello ferocissimam gentem, quod est pulcherrimum victoriae genus, terrore perdomuit. Et hoc quidem virtutis praemium, illud solatium doloris accepit, quod filio eius Cottio, quem amisit absens, habitus est honor statuae. Rarum id in iuvene; sed pater hoc quoque merebatur, cuius

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<sup>a</sup> See iii. 10.

## BOOK II. vi.-vii

position from being imposed upon by the self-indulgence which prevails at some men's tables, under the guise of frugality. And whenever any folly of this nature falls within my observation, I shall, in consequence of that affection I bear you, point it out to you as an example which you ought to shun. Remember therefore, nothing is more to be avoided than this modern conjunction of self-indulgence and meanness; qualities superlatively odious when existing in distinct characters, but still more odious where they meet together in the same person. Farewell.

### VII

#### TO MACRINUS

THE Senate decreed yesterday, at the recommendation of the emperor, a triumphal statue to Vestricius Spurinna: not as to many others who never saw a field of battle, nor a camp, nor as much as heard the sound of a trumpet, unless at a show; but as to those whose fatigues, wounds, and exploits, have procured that honour. Spurinna by the power of his arms restored the king of the Bructeri to his throne; and this by a victory of all others the most noble; for he struck such a terror into that warlike people, that they submitted at the very first view of his troops. But at the same time that the Senate thus rewarded his valour, as a consolation to him for the loss of his son Cottius,<sup>a</sup> who died during his absence upon that expedition, they voted likewise a statue to that youth. A very unusual honour for one of his early years; but the services of the father

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

gravissimo vulnere magno aliquo fomento medendum fuit.

Praeterea Cottius ipse tam clarum specimen indolis dederat, ut vita eius brevis et angusta debuerit hac velut immortalitate proferri. Nam tanta ei sanctitas, gravitas, auctoritas etiam, ut posset senes illos provocare virtute, quibus nunc honore adaequatus est. Quo quidem honore, quantum ego interpretor, non modo defuncti memoriae, dolori patris, verum etiam exemplo prospectum est. Acuent ad bonas artes iuventutem adolescentibus quoque ut<sup>1</sup> digni sint modo, tanta praemia constituta, acuent principes viros ad liberos suscipiendos et gaudia ex superstitibus et ex amissis tam gloriosa solatia.

His ex causis statua Cotti publice laetor nec privatim minus. Amavi consummatissimum iuvenem tam ardentem, quam nunc impatienter requiro. Erit ergo pergratum mihi hanc effigiem eius subinde intueri, subinde respicere, sub hac consistere, praeter hanc commeare. Etenim, si defunctorum imagines domi positae dolorem nostrum levant, quanto magis eae, quibus in celeberrimo loco non modo species et vultus illorum, sed honor etiam et gloria refertur? Vale.

<sup>1</sup> ut *Fr p*, Müller, om. *rell*.

well deserved this additional recompense, for so severe a wound required an extraordinary application.

Besides, Cottius himself gave so shining a specimen of his qualities, that it is but right his life, which had so brief a period, should be extended, as it were, by this kind of immortality. The purity of his manners, and the dignity, nay authority, of his character, were such that he might well have challenged in virtue those seniors with whom he is now equalled in honour : an honour, if I mistake not, conferred not only in memory of the deceased youth, and in consolation to the surviving father, but for the sake of public example. The young men of this age will be hence encouraged to cultivate every worthy principle, when they see such rewards open even to striplings, should they deserve them ; and men of quality will be prompted to rear issue, when they may expect not only to be happy in their children, if they survive ; but to have so glorious a consolation, if they lose them.

For the sake of the public therefore I am glad that a statue is decreed to Cottius : and so indeed I am upon my own ; for I loved this accomplished youth as ardently as I now impatiently regret him. It will be a great satisfaction to me ever and anon, to view this likeness of him—to look back towards it—to halt beneath it—to pass it as I go along. For if we derive consolation from images of the departed set up in their own homes, how much more comforting are they to the mourners, when, erected in a place of public resort, they are not only memorials of our lost ones' air and countenance, but of their glory and honour. Farewell.

# THE LETTERS OF PLINY

## VIII

C. PLINIUS CANINIO SUO S.

STUDES an piscaris an venaris an simul omnia? Possunt enim omnia simul fieri ad Larium nostrum. Nam lacus piscem, feras silvae, quibus lacus cingitur, studia altissimus iste secessus adfatim suggerunt. Sed, sive omnia simul sive aliquid facis, non possum dicere, 'Invideo'; angor tamen non et mihi licere, quae sic concupisco ut aegri vinum, balinea, fontes. Numquamne hos artissimos laqueos, si solvere negatur, abrumpam? Numquam, puto. Nam veteribus negotiis nova accrescunt, nec tamen priora peraguntur; tot nexibus, tot quasi catenis maius in dies occupationum agmen extenditur. Vale.

## IX

C. PLINIUS APOLLINARI SUO S.

ANXIUM me et inquietum habet petitio Sexti Eruci mei. Adficior cura et, quam pro me sollicitudinem non adii, quasi pro me altero patior; et alioqui meus pudor, mea existimatio, mea dignitas in discrimen adducitur. Ego Sexto latum

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## BOOK II. viii.-ix

### VIII

#### TO CANINIUS

How is my friend employed? Is it in study, or angling, or the chase? Or does he unite all three, as he well may on the banks of our favourite Larius?<sup>a</sup> For that lake will supply you with fish; as the woods that surround it will afford you game; while the solemnity of that sequestered scene will at the same time dispose your mind to contemplation. Whether you are entertained with all, or any of these agreeable amusements, I cannot bring myself to say "I envy you," yet it irks me that I cannot partake of them too; a happiness I as earnestly long for, as a sick man does for wine, baths, and water-springs. Shall I never break loose (if I may not disentangle myself) from these snares that thus closely enmesh me? I doubt indeed, never; for new affairs keep budding out of the old, while yet the former remain unfinished: such an endless train of business daily rises upon me, so numerous are the ties—I may say the chains—that bind me! Farewell.

### IX

#### TO APOLLINARIS

I AM extremely anxious and uneasy about the candidature of my friend Sextus Erucius. I am a prey to care, and feel for him as for an *alter ego* a solicitude I never felt for myself; and apart from that, my own honour, credit and character are at stake. 'Twas I obtained for him of our Emperor the honour

<sup>a</sup> See i. 3. 11.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

clavum a Caesare nostro, ego quaesturam impetravi, meo suffragio pervenit ad ius tribunatus petendi, quem nisi obtinet in senatu, vereor, ne decepisse Caesarem videar. Proinde adnitendum est mihi, ut talem eum iudicent omnes, qualem esse princeps mihi credidit. Quae causa si studium meum non incitaret, adiutum tamen cuperem iuvenem probissimum, gravissimum, eruditissimum, omni denique laude dignissimum et quidem cum tota domo.

Nam pater eius Erucius Clarus, vir sanctus, antiquus, disertus atque in agendis causis exercitatus, quas summa fide, pari constantia nec verecundia minore defendit. Habet avunculum C. Septicium, quo nihil verius, nihil simplicius, nihil candidius, nihil fidelius novi. Omnes me certatim et tamen aequaliter amant, omnibus nunc ego in uno referre gratiam possum. Itaque presso amicos, supplico, ambio, domos stationesque circumeo, quantumque vel auctoritate vel gratia valeam, precibus exporior. Te quoque obsecro, ut aliquam oneris mei partem suscipere tanti putes. Reddam vicem, si reposces, reddam, et si non reposces. Diligeris,

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<sup>a</sup> i.e. the broad purple stripe on the toga, a mark of distinction worn by senators; under the Emperors it was granted also to sons of senators and equites who were entering on their official career.

<sup>b</sup> The office of Tribune of the Plebs, carrying with it the highest powers of the State, was assumed by Julius Caesar, and after him by Augustus, and became thenceforward the

## BOOK II. ix

of wearing the *Laticlave*,<sup>a</sup> and the office of quaestor ; as it was by my interest that he qualified as a candidate for the Tribune ;<sup>b</sup> and if the Senate should reject him, I am afraid it will be thought I imposed upon the Emperor. I must therefore endeavour, that the judgement of the public may confirm the opinion which Caesar has conceived of him, by my representation. But if I were not obliged for these reasons to interest myself in the success of this young man, yet his superlative probity, good sense, and learning would incline me to assist him ; as indeed, he and his whole family are deserving of the highest applause.

His father, Erucius Clarus, is a man of strict morals and ancient simplicity of manners ; an eloquent and experienced advocate ; and defends every cause he undertakes with a courage and integrity equal to his great modesty. Caius Septicius, his uncle, is the most plain, sincere, candid, and trusty man I ever knew. There is a rivalry amongst them who shall show me most affection ; which nevertheless they all give me in an equal degree. I have now an opportunity of repaying my debt of gratitude to the whole family, in the single person of Sextus. Accordingly, I warmly solicit my friends, I entreat, I make house-to-house visits, I perambulate the places of public resort, and put my whole influence and popularity to the touch, by petitions on his behalf. I must beg of you likewise to condescend to take some share of this trouble with me ; I will return you the same good office whenever you shall require it, and even without your request. As you have many friends, pivot of Imperial authority. But Tribunes to the number of ten were still annually appointed, by election of the Senate.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

coleris, frequentaris; ostende modo velle te, nec deerunt, qui, quod tu velis, cupiant. Vale.

### X

C. PLINIUS OCTAVIO SUO.S.

HOMINEM te patientem vel potius durum ac paene crudelem, qui tam insignes libros tam diu teneas! Quousque et tibi et nobis invidebis, tibi maxima laude, nobis voluptate? Sine per ora hominum ferantur isdemque quibus lingua Romana spatiis pervagentur. Magna enim longaque expectatio est, quam frustrari adhuc et differre non debes. Enotuerunt quidam tui versus et invito te claustra sua refregerunt. Hos nisi retrahis in corpus, quandoque ut erroneus aliquem, cuius dicantur, invenient. Habe ante oculos mortalitatem, a qua adserere te hoc uno monumento potes; nam cetera fragilia et caduca non minus quam ipsi homines occidunt desinuntque.

Dices, ut soles: 'Amici mei viderint.' Opto equidem amicos tibi tam fideles, tam eruditos, tam laboriosos, ut tantum curae intentionisque suscipere et possint et velint, sed dispice, ne sit parum providum sperare ex aliis, quod tibi ipse

## BOOK II. ix.-x

admirers, and dependents, it is but showing yourself a well-wisher to Sextus in this affair, and numbers will be ready to second your inclinations. Farewell.

### X

#### TO OCTAVIUS

You are certainly a most enduring, or rather, hard-hearted, I had almost said, a most cruel man thus to withhold from the world such excellent compositions ! How long do you intend to grudge your friends the pleasure of your verses, and yourself the glory of them ? Suffer them, I entreat you, to come abroad, and to be admired ; as admired they undoubtedly will be wherever the Roman language is understood. The public, believe me, has long and earnestly expected them, and you ought not to disappoint or put it off any longer. Some few poems of yours have already, contrary to your inclinations indeed, broke their prison and escaped to light : these if you do not collect together, some person or other will claim the agreeable wanderers as their own. Remember, my friend, the mortality of human nature, and that there is nothing so likely to preserve your name, as a monument of this kind ; all others are as frail and perishable as the men whose memory they perpetuate and fall and pass like them.

You will say, I suppose, as usual, “ let my friends see to that.” May you find many whose industry, fidelity and learning render them able and willing to undertake so considerable a charge ! But surely it is not altogether prudent to expect from others what you will not do for yourself. However, as to

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

non praestes. Et de editione quidem interim, ut voles; recita saltem, quo magis libeat emittere, utque tandem percipias gaudium, quod ego olim pro te non temere praesumo. Imaginor enim, qui concursus, quae admiratio te, qui clamor, quod etiam silentium maneat; quo ego, cum dico vel recito, non minus quam clamore delector, sit modo silentium acre et intentum et cupidum ulteriora audiendi. Hoc fructu tanto, tam parato desine studia tua infinita ista cunctatione fraudare; quae cum modum excedit, verendum est, ne inertiae et desidiae vel etiam timiditatis nomen accipiat. Vale.

### XI

C. PLINIUS ARRIANO SUO S.

SOLET esse gaudio tibi, si quid actum est in senatu dignum ordine illo. Quamvis enim quietis amore secesseris, insidet tamen animo tuo maiestatis publicae cura. Accipe ergo, quod per hos dies actum est personae claritate famosum, severitate exempli salubre, rei magnitudine aeternum.

Marius Priscus accusantibus Afris, quibus pro

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<sup>a</sup> *i.e.* by an action for restitution of moneys extorted by a provincial governor. Fearing disclosures at the trial, Priscus virtually pleaded guilty to "extortion" by asking to have the case referred at once to a board of commissioners (*recip-*

## BOOK II. x.-xi

publishing of them, have your own way for the present. But let me at least prevail with you to recite them, that you may be more disposed to send them abroad ; and may receive at last that satisfaction, which I will venture, upon very just grounds, to assure you of beforehand. I please myself with imagining the crowd, the admiration, the applause, and even the silence that will attend you : for the silence of my audience, when it proceeds from attention and an earnest desire of hearing more, is as agreeable to me as the loudest approbation. Do not then, by this interminable delay defraud your labours any longer of a fruit so certain and so desirable : if you should, the world, I fear, will be apt to charge you with carelessness and indolence, or, even, with timidity. Farewell.

### XI

#### TO ARRIANUS

You ever find satisfaction in any thing that is transacted in the Senate, worthy of that august assembly : for though love of repose has called you into retirement, your heart still retains its zeal for the honour of the public. Accept then the following account of what lately passed in that venerable body ; a transaction for ever memorable by its importance, and not only remarkable by the quality of the person concerned, but useful by the severity of the example.

Marius Priscus, formerly Proconsul of Africa, being impeached<sup>a</sup> by that Province, instead of *eratores*) who would merely assess the amount of money he must refund.

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consule praefuit, omissa defensione iudices petiit. Ego et Cornelius Tacitus adesse provincialibus iussi existimavimus fidei nostrae convenire notum senatui facere excessisse Priscum immanitate et saevitia crimina, quibus dari iudices possent, cum ob innocentes condemnandos, interficiendos etiam, pecunias accepisset. Respondit Fronto Catus deprecatusque est, ne quid ultra repetundarum legem quaereretur, omniaque actionis suae vela vir movendarum lacrimarum peritissimus quodam velut vento miserationis implevit. Magna contentio, magni utrimque clamores aliis cognitionem senatus lege conclusam, aliis liberam solutamque dicentibus, quantumque admisisset reus, tantum vindicandum. Novissime consul designatus Iulius Ferox, vir rectus et sanctus, Mario quidem iudices interim censuit dandos, evocandos autem, quibus diceretur innocentium poenas vendidisse. Quae sententia non praevaluit modo, sed omnino post tantas dissensiones fuit sola frequens, adnotatumque experimentis, quod favor et misericordia acres et vehementes primos impetus habent, paulatim consilio et ratione quasi restincta considunt. Unde evenit, ut, quod multi clamore permixto tuentur, nemo tacentibus ceteris dicere velit; patescit enim, cum



defending the suit, petitioned that his case might be referred to a special commission. Cornelius Tacitus and myself, being assigned by the Senate counsel for that province, thought it our duty to inform the House, that the crimes alleged against Priscus were of too atrocious a nature to fall within the cognizance of a commission ; for he was charged with accepting bribes to condemn, and even to execute, innocent persons. Fronto Catius replied on his behalf, and moved that the whole inquiry might be confined to the single article of extortion ; a master of pathetic eloquence, he raised as it were a gale of compassion to swell the sails of his discourse. The debates grew warm, and the members were much divided in their sentiments. Some declared that the Senate could not legally take further cognizance of the matter ; others, that the House was at liberty to proceed upon it, and that punishment of the culprit ought to be made fully equivalent to his guilt. At last Julius Ferox, the consul-elect, a man of great worth and integrity, proposed that a commission should be granted to Marius provisionally and that those persons should be summoned to whom it was alleged he had sold innocent blood. Not only the majority of the Senate gave into this opinion ; but, after all the dissension that had been raised, it was the only one numerously supported. From whence one could not but observe that sentiments of compassion, though they at first operate with great violence, gradually subside under the quenching influence of reason and judgement : thus it happens, that numbers will defend by joining in the general cry, what they would never propose by themselves. The truth is, there is no discerning an object in a

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

separaris a turba, contemplatio rerum, quae turba teguntur.

Venerunt, qui adesse erant iussi, Vitellius Honoratus et Flavius Marcianus; ex quibus Honoratus trecentis milibus exilium equitis Romani septemque amicorum eius ultimam poenam, Marcianus unius equitis Romani septingentis milibus plura supplicia arguebatur emisse; erat enim fustibus caesus, damnatus in metallum, strangulatus in carcere. Sed Honoratum cognitioni senatus mors opportuna subtraxit, Marcianus inductus est absente Prisco. Itaque Tuccius Cerealis consularis iure senatorio postulavit, ut Priscus certior fieret, sive quia miserabiliorem, sive quia invidiosiore fore arbitrabatur, si praesens fuisset, sive, quod maxime credo, quia aequissimum erat commune crimen ab utroque defendi et, si dilui non potuisset, in utroque puniri.

Dilata res est in proximum senatum; cuius ipse conspectus augustissimus fuit. Princeps praesidebat (erat enim consul), ad hoc Ianuarius mensis cum cetera tum praecipue senatorum frequentia celeberrimus; praeterea causae amplitudo auctaque dilatione expectatio et fama insitumque mortali-

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<sup>a</sup> Trajan; see x. 3A. The trial took place 100 A.D.

<sup>b</sup> In this month the several magistrates entered upon their several offices.

## BOOK II. xi

crowd; one must take it aside if one would view it in its true light.

Vitellius Honoratus, and Flavius Marcianus, the persons who were ordered to be summoned, were brought before the house. Honoratus was charged with having given three hundred thousand sesterces to procure a sentence of banishment against a Roman knight, as also the capital conviction of seven of his friends. Against Marcianus it was alleged, that he gave seven hundred thousand, that another Roman knight might be condemned to suffer various tortures; and the unhappy man was first whipped, afterwards sent to work in the mines, and at last strangled in prison. But death opportunely removed Honoratus from the jurisdiction of the Senate. Marcianus however appeared, but without Priscus. Tuccius Cerealis, therefore, who had been formerly Consul, demanded, agreeably to his privilege as a senator, that notice to attend should be served upon Priscus; either because he thought the latter would excite more compassion, or perhaps more resentment, by appearing; or because, as I am inclined to believe, he thought it most equitable, as the charge was against them both, that they should both join in the defence, and be acquitted or condemned together.

The affair was adjourned to the next meeting of the Senate, which presented a most solemn spectacle. The Emperor <sup>a</sup> himself (for he was Consul) presided. It happened likewise to be the month of January <sup>b</sup> when town is very full upon many accounts, and particularly owing to the great numbers of senators which that season always brings together; moreover the importance of the cause, the bruit and expectation that had been made by the several adjournments,

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

bus studium magna et inusitata noscendi omnes undique exciverat. Imaginare, quae sollicitudo nobis, qui metus, quibus super tanta re in illo coetu praesente Caesare dicendum erat. Equidem in senatu non semel egi, quin immo nusquam audiri benignius soleo; tunc me tamen ut nova omnia novo metu permovebant. Obversabatur praeter illa, quae supra dixi, causae difficultas; stabat modo consularis, modo septemvir epulorum, iam neutrum. Erat igitur perquam onerosum accusare damnatum, quem ut premebat atrocitas criminis, ita quasi peractae damnationis miseratio tuebatur.

Utcumque tamen animum cogitationemque collegi, coepi dicere non minore audientium adsensu quam sollicitudine mea. Dixi horis paene quinque; nam XII clepsydris, quas spatiosissimas acceperam, sunt additae quattuor. Adeo illa ipsa, quae dura et adversa dicturo videbantur, secunda dicenti fuerunt. Caesar quidem mihi tantum studium, tantam etiam curam (nimium est enim dicere sollicitudinem) praestitit, ut libertum meum post me stantem

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<sup>a</sup> Established 196 B.C. to take charge of the public banquets (*epulae*) given at certain religious festivals. The original three members of this college were increased to seven, hence the title *septemviri*, which was retained after Julius Caesar had extended the number to ten.

<sup>b</sup> Forfeited by his being already convicted of "extortion."

<sup>c</sup> The *clepsydra* was a contrivance resembling an hour-glass, but containing water instead of sand. Those used in the law-courts measured a quarter of an hour each, normally;

## BOOK II. xi

together with that disposition in mankind to acquaint themselves with every thing great and uncommon, drew people together from all parts. Image to yourself the concern and anxiety we, who were to speak on so grave a charge before such an awful assembly, and in the presence of the prince, must feel. I have often pleaded in the Senate; as indeed there is no place where I am more favourably heard; yet, as if the scene had been entirely new to me, I now found myself under novel apprehensions. Besides the circumstances I have just mentioned, the difficult nature of the case was present to my mind; a man, once of consular dignity, and a member of the sacred college of Epulones,<sup>a</sup> now stood before me stripped of both those honours.<sup>b</sup> It was an onerous task, I thought, to accuse one already found guilty; one who lying as he did under the most shocking imputations was yet as it were shielded by sentiments of compassion towards a convicted person.

However, I collected my wits as best I could; I began my speech, and the applause I received was equal to the fears I had suffered; I spoke almost five hours successively (for four clepsydrae<sup>c</sup> were allowed me in addition to the twelve of the largest scale which had been granted me beforehand); and what at my first setting out had most contributed to raise my apprehensions, proved in the event greatly to my advantage. The kindness, the care of the Emperor (I dare not say his anxiety) were so great towards me, that he frequently spoke to one of my but *spatiosissimae* here implies that they could be adjusted so as to run more slowly. A general time-limit for the speeches of counsel was already established in Cicero's day; in Pliny's time it seems to have been fixed by special arrangement in each particular case.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

• saepius admoneret, voci laterique consulerem, cum me vehementius putaret intendi, quam gracilitas mea perpeti posset. Respondit mihi pro Marciano Claudius Marcellinus. Missus deinde senatus et revocatus in posterum; neque enim iam inchoari poterat actio, nisi ut noctis interventu scinderetur.

Postero die dixit pro Mario Salvius Liberalis, vir subtilis, dispositus, acer, disertus; in illa vero causa omnes artes suas protulit. Respondit Cornelius Tacitus eloquentissime et, quod eximium orationi eius inest, *σεμνῶς*. Dixit pro Mario rursus Fronto Catius insigniter, utque iam locus ille poscebat, plus in precibus temporis quam in defensione consumpsit. Huius actionem vespera inclusit, non tamen sic, ut abrumperet. Itaque in tertium diem probationes exierunt.

Iam hoc ipsum pulchrum et antiquum, senatum nocte dirimi, triduo vocari, triduo contineri. Cornutus Tertullus, consul designatus, vir egregius et pro veritate firmissimus, censuit septingenta milia, quae acceperat Marius, aerario inferenda, Mario urbe Italiaque interdicendum, Marciano hoc amplius Africa. In fine sententiae adiecit, quod ego et Tacitus iniuncta advocacy diligenter fortiterque functi essemus, arbitrari senatum ita nos fecisse, ut dignum mandatis partibus fuerit. Adsenserunt consules designati, omnes etiam consulares usque ad Pompeium Collegam; ille et septingenta milia

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<sup>a</sup> *Probationes* was the technical term for the third division of an advocate's speech, in which he submitted "proofs" to the jury.

freedmen, who stood behind me, to desire me to spare my voice and breath ; imagining I should exert myself beyond what my meagre frame would bear. Claudius Marcellinus replied in behalf of Marcianus. After which the assembly broke up till the next day ; for had another speech been begun, it would have been cut in two by nightfall.

The next day Salvius Liberalis, a very acute, methodical, spirited, and eloquent orator, spoke in defence of Priscus : and he exerted all his talents upon this occasion. Cornelius Tacitus replied to him with great eloquence, and that stateliness which distinguishes all his speeches. Fronto Catius arose up a second time for Priscus, and, in a very fine speech, endeavoured, as indeed that stage of the case required, rather to soften the judges, than defend his client. Evening suspended, but without breaking off, his oration ; accordingly, the division concerned with proofs<sup>a</sup> extended itself to the third day.

It was something very noble, and in the manner of ancient Rome, to see the Senate, adjourned only by the night, thus assemble for three days together. The excellent Cornutus Tertullus, Consul-elect, ever firm in the cause of truth, moved that Marius should pay into the treasury the 700,000 sesterces he had received, and be banished Italy in perpetuity. He was for giving Marcianus the severer sentence of banishment from Africa also. He concluded with moving that Tacitus and I having faithfully and diligently discharged the parts assigned to us, the Senate resolved we had executed our trust to their satisfaction. The consuls-elect, and those who had already enjoyed that office, agreed with the motion of Cornutus, till Pompeius Collega's turn

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

aerario inferenda et Marcianum in quinquennium relegandum, Marium repetundarum poenae, quam iam passus esset, censuit relinquendum. Erant in utraque sententia multi, fortasse etiam plures in hac vel solutiore vel molliore. Nam quidam ex illis quoque, qui Cornuto videbantur adsensi, hunc, qui post ipsos censuerat, sequebantur. Sed, cum fieret discessio, qui sellis consulum adstiterant, in Cornuti sententiam ire coeperunt. Tum illi, qui se Collegae adnumerari patiebantur, in diversum transierunt, Collega cum paucis relictus. Multum postea de impulsoribus suis, praecipue de Regulo questus est, qui se in sententia, quam ipse dictaverat, deseruisset. Est alioqui Regulo tam mobile ingenium, ut plurimum audeat, plurimum timeat.

Hic finis cognitionis amplissimae. Superest tamen *λειτουργιον*<sup>1</sup> non leve, Hostilius Firminus, legatus Mari Prisci, qui permixtus causae graviter vehementerque vexatus est. Nam et rationibus Marciani et sermone, quem ille habuerat in ordine Leptitanorum, operam suam Prisco ad turpissimum ministerium commodasse stipulatusque de Marciano quinquaginta milia denariorum probabatur, ipse praeterea accepisse sestertia decem milia foedissimo quidem titulo, no-

<sup>1</sup> ΑΙΤΟΤΥΡΤΙΟΝ *F*, ΔΙΠΟΤΥΡΤΙΟΝ *M V*, *λειτουργιον* *Das vulg. λειτουργιον*, *Merrill*, who explains the word as meaning "a small (*λίτος*) piece of business growing out of a larger one."

<sup>a</sup> "On ordering the final division, the presiding consul stated one of the proposals . . . and bade those who favoured it to seat themselves on a specified side of the house, and those who favoured any different proposition on the other side." (*Merrill*.)



## BOOK II. xi

came : he proposed that Marius should pay the seven hundred thousand sesterces into the treasury, but suffer no other punishment than what had been already inflicted upon him for extortion : as for Marcianus, he was for having him banished for five years only. There was a large party for both opinions, and perhaps the majority secretly inclined to the more lax, or more lenient sentence ; for many of those who appeared at first to agree with Cornutus, went over to Collega, who had given his opinion after they gave theirs. But upon a division of the house, all those who stood near the consuls' chairs went over to the side of Cornutus.<sup>a</sup> Thereupon, those who were allowing themselves to be reckoned with Collega, crossed over to the opposite side, leaving him almost unsupported. He afterwards complained extremely of those who had urged him to this vote, particularly Regulus, whom he upbraided for abandoning him on a motion which he himself had formulated. There is, indeed, such an inconsistency in the general character of Regulus, that he is at once both bold and timorous to excess.

Thus ended this important trial ; but there remains a considerable *appendix* to the business still behind. It is concerning Hostilius Firminus, lieutenant to Marius Priscus, who is strongly charged with being an accomplice with him : for it appeared by the accounts of Marcianus, and by a speech which he made in the municipal council at Leptis, that he was accessory to the wicked administration of Priscus ; that he had bargained for fifty thousand denarii from Marcianus ; and that he received an additional ten thousand sesterces himself, and that, moreover, under a most disgraceful item in the account, for they were

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

mine unguentarii, qui titulus a vita hominis compti semper et pumicati non abhorrebat. Placuit censente Cornuto referri de eo proximo senatu; tunc enim, casu incertum an conscientia, afuerat.

Habes res urbanas; invicem rusticas scribe. Quid arbusculae tuae, quid vineae, quid segetes agunt, quid oves delicatissimae? In summa, nisi aequae longam epistolam reddes, non est, quod postea nisi brevissimam exspectes. Vale.

### XII

C. PLINIUS ARRIANO SUO S.

Λιτούργιον illud, quod superesse Mari Prisci causae proxime scripseram, nescio an satis, circumcisum tamen et adrasum est. Firminus inductus in senatum respondit crimini noto. Secutae sunt diversae sententiae consulum designatorum; Cornutus Tertullus censuit ordine movendum, Acutius Nerva in sortitione provinciae rationem eius non habendam. Quae sententia tamquam mitior vicit, cum sit alioqui durior tristiorque. Quid enim miserius quam

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<sup>a</sup> *Unguentarium* (sc. *argentum*), lit. "ointment-money," was a euphemistic term for a gratuity. (Merrill.)

## BOOK II. xi.-xii

put down as *toilet-money*.<sup>a</sup> An entry quite in keeping with his foppish and effeminate personal habits! It was agreed, at the motion of Cornutus, to proceed against him, at the next meeting of the senate: for, either by accident or conscious guilt, he was at this time absent.

Thus have I given you an account of what is doing in town. Let me know in return, the news of the country; how your groves and your vineyards, your corn and your choice breed of sheep flourish? In fine, if you do not return me a letter as long as this, you need not expect to receive from me for the future any but the briefest. Farewell.

## XII

### TO THE SAME

THAT *appendix* to the case of Priscus, which I mentioned to you in my former letter, is at last polished off<sup>b</sup>—after a fashion. Firminus being brought before the Senate, made such a sort of defence as a man generally does who is conscious of detected guilt. The consuls-elect thereupon pronounced divergent opinions. Cornutus Tertullus moved he should be expelled the Senate; Acutius Nerva, that he should be left out from the allotment of provinces to past consuls; and this, as it had the appearance of a milder sentence, prevailed, though in truth it was the sterner and more severe. For can any situation be more wretched, than to be cut

<sup>b</sup> Apparently a metaphor borrowed from the “finishing” of a statue by chiselling and filing.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

exectum et exemptum honoribus senatoriis labore et molestia non carere? quid gravius quam tanta ignominia adfectum non in solitudine latere, sed in hac altissima specula conspiciendum se monstrandumque praebere? praeterea quid publice minus aut congruens aut decorum quam <sup>1</sup> notatum a senatu in senatu sedere ipsisque illis, a quibus sit notatus, aequari, summotum a proconsulatu, quia se in legatione turpiter gesserat, de proconsulibus iudicare damnatumque sordium vel damnare alios vel absolvere? Sed hoc pluribus visum est. Numerantur enim sententiae, non ponderantur; nec aliud in publico consilio potest fieri, in quo nihil est tam inaequale quam aequalitas ipsa. Nam, cum sit impar prudentia, par omnium ius est.

Implevi promissum priorisque epistulae fidem exsolvi, quam ex spatio temporis iam recepisse te colligo; nam et festinanti et diligenti tabellario dedi; nisi quid impedimenti in via passus est. Tuae nunc partes, ut primum illam, deinde hanc remunereris litteris, quales istinc redire uberrimae possunt. Vale.

<sup>1</sup> quam *add. Sichard.*

off from senatorial honours, without exemption from the laborious duties of a senator? What can be harder to bear than, after having received such an ignominy, not to lie hid in solitude, but to be exposed in so lofty a station to the view of the world? Besides, to consider this with respect to the public, what can be more unbecoming the majesty of the Senate, than to suffer a person to retain a seat in the House, after having been publicly censured by it? What can be more indecent than for the censured to be ranked with his censors? for a man excluded the Proconsulship, because he behaved infamously as a lieutenant, to sit in judgement upon Proconsuls? for one proved guilty of the most sordid avarice, to condemn or acquit others of the like? But this was what seemed good to the majority. Votes go by number, not weight; nor can it be otherwise in assemblies of this kind, where nothing is more unequal than that equality which prevails in them; for though every member has the same right of suffrage, every member has not the same strength of judgement to direct it.

I have thus discharged the promise I gave you in my last letter, which by my reckoning of the time elapsed (unless any accident has befallen the post-runner to whom I gave it) should now have reached your hands; for he is a diligent fellow, and besides was in a hurry. I hope you will now, on your part, make me as full a return for this and my former as the scene you are in will permit. Farewell.

# THE LETTERS OF PLINY

## XIII

C. PLINIUS PRISCO SUO S.

ET tu occasiones obligandi me avidissime amplecteris, et ego nemini libentius debeo. Duabus ergo de causis a te potissimum petere constitui, quod impetratum maxime cupio. Regis exercitum amplissimum; hinc tibi beneficiorum larga materia, longum praeterea tempus, quo amicos tuos exornare potuisti. Convertere ad nostros nec hos multos. Malles tu quidem multos, sed meae verecundiae sufficit unus aut alter ac potius unus. Is erit Vconius Romanus.

Pater ei in equestri gradu clarus, clarior vitricus, immo pater alius (nam huic quoque nomini pietate successit), mater e primis. Ipse citerioris Hispaniae (scis, quod iudicium provinciae illius, quanta sit gravitas) flamen proxime fuit. Hunc ego, cum simul studeremus, arte familiariterque dilexi; ille meus in urbe, ille in secessu contubernalis, cum hoc seria, cum hoc iocos miscui. Quid

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<sup>a</sup> It is possible that the Priscus here addressed was L. Neratius Priscus, praetorian legate of Pannonia 98 or 99 A. D.

<sup>b</sup> i.e., priest of the Temple of "Rome and Augustus" at Tarraco. This *flamen* was elected annually by the cities of the province.

## XIII

## TO PRISCUS

As I know you gladly embrace every opportunity of obliging me, so there is no man to whom I had rather lay myself under an obligation. Thus I am doubly prompted to apply to you, preferably to any body else, for a favour which I am extremely desirous of obtaining. You who are at the head of a very considerable army <sup>a</sup> have many opportunities of bestowing kindnesses; and the length of time you have enjoyed that post, must have enabled you to advance all your own friends. I hope you will now turn your eyes upon some of mine: they are but one or two indeed, for whom I shall solicit you; a man of your disposition, I know, would be better pleased if the number were greater. But I am too modest to trouble you with recommending more than one or two; at present I will only mention Voconius Romanus.

His father was of great distinction among the Roman knights; and his step-father, or as I might more properly call him, his second father (for his affectionate treatment of Voconius entitles him to that appellation) was still more conspicuous. His mother belonged to one of the most considerable families. He himself was lately Flamen <sup>b</sup> of Hither Spain: you know what character the people of that province bear, and how remarkable they are for the strictness of their manners. Our friendship began with our studies, and we were early united in the closest intimacy. We lived together in town and country; he shared with me my most serious

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

enim illo aut fidelius amico aut sodale iucundius? Mira in sermone, mira etiam in ore ipso vultuque suavitas. Ad hoc ingenium excelsum, subtile, dulce, facile, eruditum in causis agendis; epistulas quidem scribit, ut Musas ipsas Latine loqui credas. Amatur a me plurimum nec tamen vincitur. Equidem iuvenis statim iuveni, quantum potui per aetatem, avidissime contuli et nuper ab optimo principe trium liberorum ei ius impetravi. Quod quamquam parce et cum delectu daret, mihi tamen, tamquam eligeret,<sup>1</sup> indulisit. Haec beneficia mea tueri nullo modo melius, quam ut augeam, possum, praesertim cum ipse illa tam grate interpretetur, ut, dum priora accipit, posteriora mereatur.

Habes, qualis, quam probatus carusque sit nobis; quem rogo pro ingenio, pro fortuna tua exòrnes. In primis ama hominem; nam, licet tribuas ei, quantum amplissimum potes, nihil tamen amplius potes amicitia tua; cuius esse eum usque ad intimam familiaritatem capacem quo

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<sup>1</sup> eligeret *Ricc. Fa, K*, liceret *M V*.

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<sup>a</sup> Augustus, with a view to counteracting the tendency to race suicide, had granted certain exemptions and privileges to fathers of three legitimate children. But the *ius trium liberorum* became later an artificial privilege which the Emperor could confer at his pleasure on childless citizens; thus Pliny himself received it from Trajan (x. 2) and requested it for Suetonius (x. 94).



## BOOK II. xiii

and my gayest hours : and where, indeed, could I have found a more faithful friend, or more agreeable companion ? In his conversation, and even in his very voice and countenance, there is an extraordinary sweetness ; to this advantage he joins an elevated, penetrating, facile, and charming mind, deeply versed in legal practice. His letters are such, that were you to read them, you would imagine the Muses themselves talk Latin. I love him with more than common affection, yet not exceeding his for me. For my part, from our boyish days I warmly embraced every opportunity of doing him all the good offices which then lay in my power ; as I have lately obtained for him of our excellent Emperor the privilege granted to those who have three children :<sup>a</sup> a favour which though Caesar bestows sparingly and with discrimination, yet he conferred, at my request, in such a manner as to give it the air of being his own choice. My best way of maintaining the obligation he has already incurred to me, is by adding more to them, especially as he always accepts my good offices with so much gratitude as to merit farther.

Thus I have given you a faithful account of Romanus, and informed you how thoroughly I have experienced his worth, and how much I love him. Let me entreat you to honour him with your patronage in a way suitable to the generosity of your heart, and the eminence of your station. But, above all, admit him into a share of your affection ; for though you were to confer upon him the utmost you have in your power to bestow, you can give him nothing more valuable than your friendship. That you may see he is worthy of it, even to the highest

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

magis scires, breviter tibi studia, mores, omnem denique vitam eius expressi. Extenderem preces, nisi et tu rogari diu nolles, et ego tota hoc epistula fecissem; rogat enim et quidem efficacissime, qui reddit causas rogandi. Vale.

### XIV

C. PLINIUS MAXIMO SUO S.

VERUM opinaris; distringor centumviralibus causis quae me exercent magis quam delectant. Sunt enim pleraeque parvae et exiles; raro incidit vel personarum claritate vel negotii magnitudine insignis. Ad hoc perpauci, cum quibus iuvet dicere, ceteri audaces atque etiam magna ex parte adolescentuli obscuri ad declamandum huc transeunt tam irreverenter et temere, ut mihi Atilius noster expresse dixisse videatur sic in foro pueros a centumviralibus causis auspicari ut ab Homero in scholis. Nam hic quoque ut illic primum coepit esse, quod maximum est. At hercule ante memoriam meam (ita maiores natu solent dicere) ne nobilissimis quidem adolescentibus locus erat nisi aliquo consulari producente;

## BOOK II. xiii.-xiv

degree of intimacy, I have sent you this short sketch of his tastes, his manners, in fine, his whole character. I should continue my intercessions in his behalf, but that I am sure you do not love long appeals, and I have uttered one in every line of this letter : for to show good cause for a request, is to make it, and that in the most effectual way. Farewell.

### XIV

#### TO MAXIMUS

You guessed right : I am engrossed in pleading before the Centumviri, a business which brings me more of fatigue than pleasure. The causes are generally trivial and jejune, and it is very seldom that any thing considerable, either from the importance of the question, or the rank of the persons concerned, comes before them. There is this farther disagreeable circumstance attending it, that there are very few counsel who frequent this court, with whom I can take any sort of satisfaction in appearing. The rest are a parcel of impudent fellows, and the majority actually obscure young men, who migrate hither from the schools, to practise declaiming, with so much irreverence and impropriety, that my friend Atilius with great justice observed, "our boys set out at the bar with Centumviral causes, as they do at school with Homer," intimating, that in both places they begin at the top of the ladder. But "before I can remember" (to use an old man's phrase) it was not admissible for the youth, even of the best families, to appear as counsel, unless introduced by some

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

tanta veneratione pulcherrimum opus colebatur. Nunc refractis pudoris et reverentiae claustris omnia patent omnibus, nec inducuntur, sed irrumpunt.

Sequuntur auditores actoribus similes, conducti et redempti;<sup>1</sup> manceps convenitur; in media basilica tam palam sportulae, quam in triclinio dantur. Ex iudicio in iudicium pari mercede transitur. Inde iam non inurbane Σοφοκλεῖς vocantur ἀπὸ τοῦ σοφῶς καὶ καλεῖσθαι; isdem Latinum nomen impositum est 'Laudiceni.' Et tamen crescit in dies foeditas utraque lingua notata. Heri duo nomenclatores mei (habent sane aetatem eorum, qui nuper togas sumpserint) ternis denariis ad laudandum trahebantur. Tanti constat, ut sis disertissimus. Hoc pretio quamlibet numerosa subsellia implentur, hoc ingens corona colligitur, hoc infiniti clamores commoventur, cum μεσόχορος dedit signum. Opus est enim signo apud non intellegentes, ne audientes quidem; nam plerique non audiunt, nec ulli magis laudant. Si

<sup>1</sup> conducti et redempti; manceps convenitur; in media *K* ex *MVD*, conducti et redempti mancipēs. convenitur a cond. et red. *pra*, manceps conv. a conductis et red. *F* (*om.* manceps) *Otto, Müller.*

<sup>a</sup> i.e. of money, which replaced the dole of food anciently given by a patron to his clients. Here the fee paid in advance to these professional *claqueurs* by the agents (*manceps*) who employ them.

<sup>b</sup> Lit. "from the words 'Bravo!' and 'to call.'" The second pun (on Laodiceans, from *laus*, "praise" and *cena*, "supper,") is the less execrable of the two.

person of Consular dignity : so much respect did our ancestors bear to this noble profession. But now, since every restraint of modesty and reverence is broken down, and all distinctions levelled and confounded, the youth of our day are so far from waiting to be introduced, that they rudely rush in uninvited.

The audience that follow them are fit for such performers, a low rout of hired mercenaries ; they keep their appointment with the contractor ; in the middle of the court-house the dole<sup>a</sup> is dealt round to them as openly as if they were in a dining-room : and at this noble price they run from court to court ! Hence this sort of people are dubbed in Greek, wittily enough, *Sophocleses*, importing that they are applauders by profession,<sup>b</sup> and we call them in Latin *table-flatterers* ; yet the meanness stigmatized in both languages increases every day. It was but yesterday two of my remembrancers,<sup>c</sup> who are only just old enough to wear the toga, were hired to applaud at the price of three denarii apiece ; so cheaply may you buy the title of Most Eloquent ! Upon these terms, we fill any number of benches and gather a huge circle ; and thus it is those unmerciful shouts are raised, when the chorus-conductor gives the word. For you must know, these honest fellows, who understand nothing of what is said, and cannot even hear it, would be at a loss, without a signal, how to time their applause ; for most of them do not hear a syllable, and these are as clamorous as any of the rest. If at any time

<sup>a</sup> Romans of quality kept one or more slaves, called *nomenclatores*, whose business it was to know every one by sight, and prompt their master with the names of those who called on him, or saluted him abroad.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

quando transibis per basilicam et voles scire, quo modo quisque dicat, nihil est, quod tribunal ascendas, nihil, quod praebeas aurem; facilis divinatio; scito eum pessime dicere, qui laudabitur maxime.

Primus hunc audiendi morem induxit Larcus<sup>1</sup> Licinus, hactenus tamen, ut auditores corrogaret. Ita certe ex Quintiliano, praeceptore meo, audisse memini. Narrabat ille: ‘Adsectabar Domitium Afrum. Cum apud centumviros diceret graviter et lente (hoc enim illi actionis genus erat), audiit ex proximo immodicum insolitumque clamorem. Admiratus reticuit. Ubi silentium factum est, repetiit, quod abruperat. Iterum clamor, iterum reticuit, et post silentium coepit idem tertio. Novissime, quis diceret, quaesivit. Responsum est, “Licinus.” Tum intermissa causa, “Centumviri,” inquit, “hoc artificium periit.”’ Quod alioqui perire incipiebat, cum perisse Afro videretur, nunc vero prope funditus extinctum et eversum est. Pudet referre, quae quam fracta pronuntiatione dicantur, quibus, quam teneris<sup>2</sup> clamoribus excipiantur. Plausus tantum ac potius sola cymbala et tympana illis canticis desunt; ululatus quidem (neque enim alio vocabulo potest exprimi theatri quoque indecora laudatio) large supersunt. Nos tamen adhuc et utilitas amicorum et ratio aetatis moratur ac retinet; vere-

<sup>1</sup> Larcus *Ricc. Fa, K*, Largus *MVD pr.*

<sup>2</sup> teneris *vulg. taetris Momms. K ii, Müll.*

you should happen to pass by the court-house, and would know the merit of any of our advocates, you have no occasion to give yourself the trouble of mounting the bench or of listening to them : here there is a simple method of divination : take it for a rule, he that has the loudest commendations is the worst orator.

Larcus Licinus was the first who gave rise to this custom ; but then he went no farther than to solicit an audience : so I remember to have heard my tutor Quintilian say. He used to relate this anecdote—“I was a follower of Domitius Afer. Pleading one day before the Centumviral Court, in his wonted grave and deliberate manner, he heard near by a most immoderate and unusual noise. Being a good deal surprised, he left off ; when the noise ceased, he began again ; he was interrupted a second time, and a third. At last he inquired who it was that was speaking ? He was told, Licinus. Thereupon, abandoning the suit, ‘Your Honours,’ says he, ‘it is all over with this profession.’” The truth is, it was only beginning to decline, when in Afer’s opinion it was entirely perished : whereas now it is almost utterly ruined and extinct. I am ashamed to say with what an unmanly elocution the orators deliver themselves, and with what a squeaking applause they are received ; nothing seems wanting to compleat this sing-song oratory, but the claps, or rather the cymbals and tambourines of Cybele’s votaries. Howlings (for I can call by no other term a sort of applause which would be indecent even in the theatre), we have enough of and to spare. Hitherto the interest of my friends, and the consideration of my early time of life, has retained me in this court : for it would be

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

mur enim, ne forte non has indignitates reliquisse, sed laborem refugisse videamur. Sumus tamen solito rariores, quod initium est gradatim desinendi. Vale.

### XV

C. PLINIUS VALERIANO SUO S.

Quomodo te veteres Marsi tui? quomodo emptio nova? Placent agri, postquam tui facti sunt? Rarum id quidem! Nihil enim aeque gratum est adeptis, quam concupiscentibus. Me praedia materna parum commode tractant, delectant tamen ut materna, alioqui longa patientia occallui. Habent hunc finem adsiduae querelae, quod queri pudet. Vale.

### XVI

C. PLINIUS ANNIO SUO S.

Tu quidem pro cetera tua diligentia admones me codicillos Aciliani, qui me ex parte instituit heredem, pro non scriptis habendos, quia non sint confirmati testamento; quod ius ne mihi quidem ignotum est,

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<sup>a</sup> A codicil, by the ancient civil law, was a less solemn kind of will, in which it was not necessary to observe so strictly the ceremonies prescribed by the law for a will. But



## BOOK II. xiv.—xvi

thought, I fear, rather an evasion of fatigues than a relinquishment of these indecencies, were I yet to leave it: however I come there less frequently than usual, and am thus preparing a gradual retreat. Farewell.

### XV

#### TO VALERIANUS

How goes on your old Marsian estate? and how do you approve of your new purchase? Has it as many beauties in your eye now, as before you bought it? That would be extraordinary indeed! for an object in possession never retains the same charms it had in pursuit. As for myself, the estate left me by my mother uses me but ill; however I value it for her sake, and am, besides, grown a good deal insensible by a long course of endurance. Thus constant complaints generally end at last in being ashamed of complaining any more.

### XVI

#### TO ANNIANUS

You act agreeably to your usual kind concern for my interest, when you advise me to look upon the codicil <sup>a</sup> of Acilianus (who has appointed me one of his co-heirs) as void, because it is not confirmed by his will. That the law in this case esteems it invalid, I well know; and it is a point to which even those

no legacy given by a codicil was valid, unless confirmed by the will, which was esteemed its basis. (Melm.)

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

cum sit iis etiam notum, qui nihil aliud sciunt. Sed ego propriam quandam legem mihi dixi, ut defunctorum voluntates, etiamsi iure deficerent, quasi perfectas tuerer. Constat autem codicillos istos Aciliani manu scriptos. Licet ergo non sint confirmati testamento, a me tamen ut confirmati observabuntur, praesertim cum delatori locus non sit. Nam, si verendum esset, ne, quod ego dedissem, populus eriperet, cunctatior fortasse et cautior esse deberem; cum vero liceat heredi donare, quod in hereditate subsedit, nihil est, quod obstat illi meae legi, cui publicae leges non repugnant. Vale.

### XVII

C. PLINIUS GALLO SUO S.

MIRARIS, cur me Laurentinum, vel, si ita mavis, Laurens meum tantopere delectet. Desines mirari, cum cognoveris gratiam villae, opportunitatem loci, litoris spatium. Decem et septem milibus passuum ab urbe secessit, ut peractis, quae agenda fuerint, salvo iam et composito die possis ibi manere. Aditur non una via; nam et Laurentina et Ostiensis eodem

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<sup>a</sup> i.e. pass to the State treasury, under the laws relating to intestacy and void bequests.

## BOOK II. xvi.-xvii

who are ignorant of every other are usually no strangers. But I have as it were laid down a special law for myself, and that is, to carry out the intention of the dead, though it may not be legally binding, as if it were formally valid. This codicil, beyond all manner of doubt, is of Acilianus's own hand-writing: therefore though it is not confirmed by his will, I shall be guided by it as strictly as if it were: especially as there is no danger that any informer can take advantage of this mistake. If indeed there was any hazard, that what I give to the legatees in the codicil would be forfeited to the use of the public,<sup>a</sup> I ought perhaps to act with more caution and deliberation; but as the heir may dispose of what accrues to him as such, in the manner he thinks proper; nothing hinders, since the law of the land does not, my observing that law which I have laid down to myself. Farewell.

### XVII

#### TO GALLUS

You are surprised, it seems, that I am so fond of my Laurentinum, or (if you like the appellation better) my Laurens: but you will cease to wonder, when I acquaint you with the charm of the villa, the advantages of its situation, and the extensive prospect of the sea-coast. It is but seventeen miles distant from Rome; so that having finished your affairs in town, you can spend the night here after completing a full working-day. There are two different roads to it; if you go by that of Laurentum, you must turn off at the fourteenth mile-

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

ferunt, sed Laurentina a quartodecimo lapide, Ostiensis ab undecimo relinquenda est. Utrimque excipit iter aliqua ex parte harenosum iunctis paulo gravius et longius, equo breve et molle. Varia hinc atque inde facies; nam modo occurrentibus silvis via coartatur, modo latissimis pratis diffunditur et patescit; multi greges ovium, multa ibi equorum boumque armenta, quae montibus hieme depulsa, herbis et tepore verno nitescent.

Villa usibus capax, non sumptuosa tutela. Cuius in prima parte atrium frugi nec tamen sordidum, deinde porticus in D litterae similitudine circumactae, quibus parvula sed festiva area includitur. Egregium hae adversus tempestates receptaculum; nam specularibus ac multo magis imminentibus tectis muniuntur. Est contra medias cavaedium hilare, mox triclinium satis pulchrum, quod in litus excurrit ac, si quando Africo mare impulsus est, fractis iam et novissimus fluctibus leviter adluitur. Undique valvas aut fenestras non minores valvis habet atque ita a lateribus et a fronte quasi tria maria prospectat; a tergo cavaedium, porticum, aream, porticum rursus, mox atrium, silvas et longinquos respicit montes.

Huius a laeva retractius paulo cubiculum est

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stone; if by Ostia, at the eleventh. Both of them are in some parts sandy, which makes it something heavy and tedious if you travel in a coach, but easy and pleasant to those who ride. The landscape on all sides is extremely diversified, the prospect in some places being confined by woods, in others extending over broad meadows, where numberless flocks of sheep and herds of horses and cattle, which the severity of the winter has drove from the mountains, fatten in the vernal warmth of this rich pasturage.

My villa is large enough for my convenience, without being expensive to maintain. The entrance-hall is plain, but not mean, through which you enter into a portico in the form of the Letter D, which includes a small, but agreeable area. This affords a capital retreat in bad weather, as it is sheltered by glazed windows, and much more by overhanging eaves. From the middle of this portico you pass into an inward hall extremely pleasant, and from thence into a handsome enough dining-room which runs out towards the sea; so that when a south-west wind drives the sea shoreward, it is gently washed by the edge of the last breakers. On every side of this room there are either folding doors or windows equally large, by which means you have a view from the front and the sides, as it were of three different seas; from the back part you see the middle court, the portico and the area; and by another view you look through the portico into the atrium, from whence the prospect is terminated by the woods and mountains which are seen at a distance.

On the left-hand of this room, something retired from its façade, lies a large drawing-room,

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

amplum, deinde aliud minus, quod altera fenestra admittit orientem, occidentem altera retinet, hac et subiacens mare longius quidem, sed securius intuetur. Huius cubiculi et triclinii illius obiectu includitur angulus, qui purissimum solem continet et accendit. Hoc hibernaculum, hoc etiam gymnasium meorum est; ibi omnes silent venti exceptis qui nubilum inducunt et serenum, ante quam usum loci eripiunt. Adnectitur angulo cubiculum in hapsida curvatum, quod ambi tumsolis fenestris omnibus sequitur. Parieti eius in bibliothecae speciem armarium insertum est, quod non legendos libros, sed lectitandos capit. Adhaeret dormitorium membrum transitu interiacente, qui suspensus et tubulatus conceptum vaporem salubri temperamento huc illucque digerit et ministrat. Reliqua pars lateris huius servorum libertorumque usibus detinetur plerisque tam mundis, ut accipere hospites possint.

Ex alio latere cubiculum est politissimum; deinde vel cubiculum grande vel modica cenatio, quae plurimo sole, plurimo mari lucet; post hanc cubiculum cum procoetone altitudine aestivum, munimentis hibernum; est enim subductum omnibus ventis.

and beyond that, a second of a smaller size, which has one window to the rising, and another to the setting sun : this has likewise a prospect of the sea, but being at a greater distance, is less incommoded by it. The angle which the projection of the hall makes with this drawing-room, retains and increases the warmth of the sun ; this serves as a winter retreat, and also as a gymnasium for my household ; it is sheltered from all winds except those which are generally attended with clouds, so that nothing can render this place useless, but what at the same time destroys the fair weather. Contiguous to this, is a room forming the segment of a circle, the windows of which are so placed as to receive the sun the whole day ; in the wall is contrived a cupboard like a bookcase, which contains a collection of such authors whose works can never be read too often. From hence you pass into a bedchamber through a passage, which having a boarded floor over a stove which runs underneath, and pipes in the walls, tempers the heat which it receives and conveys to the adjacent rooms. The remainder of this side of the house is appropriated to the use of my slaves and freedmen, but however most of the apartments in it are neat enough to entertain guests.

In the opposite wing is a very elegant parlour ; next to which lies another room, which though large for a parlour, makes but a moderate dining-room ; it is exceedingly warmed and enlightened not only by the direct rays of the sun, but by their reflection from the sea. Beyond this is a chamber, together with its ante-chamber, the height of which renders it cool in summer, as its being sheltered on all sides from the winds makes it warm

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Huic cubiculo aliud et procoeton communi pariete iunguntur. Inde balinei cella frigidaria spatiosa et effusa, cuius in contrariis parietibus duo baptisteria velut eiecta sinuantur, abunde capacia, si mare<sup>1</sup> in proximo cogites. Adiacet unctorium, hypocauston, adiacet propnigeon balinei mox duae cellae magis elegantes quam sumptuosae; cohaeret calida piscina mirifica, ex qua natantes mare aspiciunt, nec procul sphaeristerium, quod calidissimo soli inclinato iam die occurrit. Hinc turris erigitur, sub qua diaetae duae, totidem in ipsa, praeterea cenatio, quae latissimum mare, longissimum litus, amoenissimas villas prospicit. Est et alia turris. In hac cubiculum, in quo sol nascitur conditurque, lata post apotheca et horreum, sub hoc triclinium, quod turbati maris non nisi fragorem et sonum patitur eumque iam languidum ac desinentem; hortum et gestationem videt, qua hortus includitur.

Gestatio buxo aut rore marino, ubi deficit buxus, ambitur; nam buxus, qua parte defenditur tectis, abunde viret; aperto caelo apertoque vento et quam-

<sup>1</sup> mare *M V Dr, K, Merr.*, sin mare *Ricc. Fp*, si innare *a*, si nare *Catan., Otto, Müll.*

<sup>a</sup> i.e. there is no need for extra large cold baths, when you can get your plunge in the sea.



in winter. To this apartment another of the same sort is joined by one common wall. From thence you enter into the grand and spacious *cooling-room* belonging to the baths, from the opposite walls of which two basins curve outwards as though the wall were pressed into half-hoops; these are fully large enough, if you consider that the sea is close by.<sup>a</sup> Contiguous to this is the anointing room, the furnace adjoining, and boiler-room; then come two other little bathing-rooms, which are fitted up in an elegant rather than costly manner: annexed to this, is a warm bath of extraordinary workmanship, wherein one may swim, and have a prospect at the same time of the sea. Not far from hence stands the tennis-court, which lies open to the warmth of the afternoon sun. From thence you ascend a sort of turret, which contains two entire apartments below; there are the same number above, besides a dining-room which commands a very extensive prospect of the sea and coast, together with the beautiful villas that stand upon it. There is a second turret, containing a room which takes both the rising and setting sun. Behind this is a store-room and a larder, and underneath a spacious dining-room where the sea roaring in tempest is not felt, but only heard, and that faintly: it looks upon the garden and the *allée*, which surrounds the garden.

The *allée* is encompassed with a box-tree hedge, and where that is decayed, with rosemary; for the box in those parts which are sheltered by the buildings, preserves its verdure perfectly well: but where by an open situation it lies exposed to the winds and to the dashing sea-water, though at a great

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

quam longinqua aspergine maris inarescit. Adiacet gestationi interiore circuitu vinea tenera et umbrosa nudisque etiam pedibus mollis et cedens. Hortum morus et ficus frequens vestit, quarum arborum illa vel maxime ferax terra est, malignior ceteris. Hac non deteriore quam maris facie cenatio remota a mari fruitur, cingitur diaetis duabus a tergo, quarum fenestris subiacet vestibulum villae et hortus alius pinguis et rusticus.

Hinc cryptoporticus prope publici operis extenditur. Utrimque fenestrae, a mari plures, ab horto singulae, et alternis pauciores. Hae, cum serenus dies et immotus, omnes, cum hinc vel inde ventus inquietus, qua venti quiescunt, sine iniuria patent. Ante cryptoporticum xystus violis odoratus. Teporem solis infusi percussu cryptoporticus auget, quae ut tenet solem sic aquilonem inhibet summovetque, quantumque caloris ante tantum retro frigoris. Similiter Africum sistit atque ita diversissimos ventos alium alio latere, frangit et finit. Haec iucunditas eius hieme, maior aestate. Nam ante meridiem xystum, post meridiem gestationis hortique proximam partem umbra sua

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<sup>a</sup> *Cryptoporticus*, a portico walled on both sides, forming a corridor.

<sup>b</sup> Lit. a number on the seaward side, on the side towards the garden they are placed singly and are fewer by every other window (than those opposite).

distance, it entirely withers. Between the garden and this *allée* runs a shady walk of vines, soft and yielding to the tread, even when you walk bare-foot. The garden is thickly planted with fig and mulberry trees, to which this soil is as favourable as it is averse to all others. In this place is a banqueting room, which though it stands remote from the sea, enjoys however a prospect nothing inferior to that view: two apartments run round the back part of it, whose windows look respectively upon the entrance of the villa, and into a well-stocked kitchen garden.

From hence a gallery<sup>a</sup> extends itself, which by its size you might take for a public one. It has a range of windows on each side, but on that which looks towards the sea they are double the number of those next the garden.<sup>b</sup> When the weather is fair and serene, these are all thrown open; but if it blows, those on the side the wind sits are shut, while the others remained unclosed without any inconvenience. Before this gallery lies a terrace perfumed with violets, and warmed by the reflection of the sun from the gallery, which as it retains the rays, so it keeps off the north-east wind; and it is as warm on this side, as it is cool on the opposite: in the same manner it is a defence against the south-west, and thus in short, by means of its several sides, breaks the force of the winds from what point soever they blow. These are some of the winter advantages of this building, which however has still more considerable in the summer; for at that season it throws a shade upon the terrace during all the forenoon, as it defends the nearest part of the *allée* and garden from the afternoon sun, and casts a

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

temperat, quae, ut dies crevit decrevitve, modo brevior, modo longior hac vel illac cadit. Ipsa vero cryptoporticus tum maxime caret sole, cum ardentissimus culmini eius insistit. Ad hoc patentibus fenestris favonios accipit transmittitque nec unquam aëre pigro et manente ingravescit.

In capite xysti deinceps cryptoporticus, horti diaeta est, amores mei, revera amorem, ipse posui. In hac heliocaminus quidem alia xystum, alia mare, utraque solem, cubiculum autem valvis cryptoporticum, fenestra prospicit mare. Contra parietem medium zotheca perquam eleganter recedit, quae specularibus et velis obductis reductisve modo adicitur cubiculo, modo aufertur. Lectum et duas cathedras capit; a pedibus mare, a tergo villae, a capite silvae. Tot facies locorum totidem fenestris et distinguit et miscet. Iunctum est cubiculum noctis et somni. Non illud voces servulorum, non maris murmur, non tempestatum motus, non fulgurum lumen ac ne diem quidem sentit nisi fenestris apertis. Tam alti abditique secreti illa ratio, quod interioriens andron parietem cubiculi hortique distinguit atque ita omnem sonum media inanitate consumit.

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<sup>a</sup> *Heliocaminus*, "sun-parlour."

greater or less shade either way as the day either increases or decreases ; but the portico itself is then shadiest when the sun is most scorching, that is, when its rays fall directly upon the roof.<sup>1</sup> To these advantages I must not forget to add, that by setting open the windows, the western breezes have a free draught, and by that means the enclosed air is prevented from stagnating.

Crowning the terrace, portico, and garden, stands a detached building, which I call my *favourite* : and in truth I am extremely fond of it, as I erected it myself. It contains a very warm winter-room,<sup>a</sup> one side of which looks upon the terrace, the other has a view of the sea, and ~~is~~ is exposed to the sun ; and a chamber looking by folding-doors upon the enclosed portico and by a window on the sea. Against the middle wall stands a little elegant retired closet, which by means of glass doors and a curtain, is either laid into the adjoining room, or separated from it. It holds a couch and two chairs. As you lie upon this couch, from the feet you have a prospect of the sea ; if you look behind, you see the neighbouring villas ; and from the head you have a view of the woods : these three views may be seen either distinctly from so many different windows in the room, or blended together in one confused prospect. Adjoining to this, is a bed-chamber, which neither the voice of the servants, the murmur of the sea, nor even the roaring of a tempest can reach ; not lightening nor the day itself can penetrate it, unless you open the windows. This profound tranquillity is occasioned by a passage, which divides the wall of this chamber from that of the garden, and thus, by means of that void intervening

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Applicatum est cubiculo hypocauston perexiguum, quod angusta fenestra suppositum calorem, ut ratio exigit, aut effundit aut retinet. Procoeton inde et cubiculum porrigitur in solem, quem orientem statim exceptum ultra meridiem obliquum quidem, sed tamen servat. In hanc ego diaetam cum me recipio, abesse mihi etiam a villa mea videor magnamque eius voluptatem praecipue Saturnalibus capio, cum reliqua pars tecti licentia dierum festisque clamoribus personat; nam nec ipse meorum lusibus nec illi studiis meis obstrepunt.

Haec utilitas, haec amoenitas deficitur aqua salienti, sed puteos ac potius fontes habet; sunt enim in summo. Et omnino litoris illius mira natura. Quocunque loco moveris humum, obvius et paratus umor occurrit isque sincerus ac ne leviter quidem tanta maris vicinitate salsus. Suggestunt adfatim ligna proximae silvae; ceteras copias Ostiensis colonia ministrat. Frugi quidem homini sufficit etiam vicus, quem una villa discernit. In hoc balinea meritoria tria, magna commoditas, si forte balineum domi vel subitus adventus vel brevior mora calefacere dissuadeat.

Litus ornant varietate gratissima nunc continua nunc intermissa tecta villarum, quae praestant mul-

space, every noise is drowned. Annexed, is a small stove-room, which, by opening a little window, warms the bed-chamber to the degree of heat required. Beyond this lie a chamber and ante-chamber which catch the rising sun and enjoy it, though obliquely indeed, till the afternoon. When I retire to this garden-apartment, I fancy myself a hundred miles from my own house, and take particular pleasure in it at the feast of the Saturnalia, when, by the licence of that season of joy, every other part of my villa resounds with the mirth of my domestics : thus I neither interrupt their diversions, nor they my studies.

Among the pleasures and conveniences of this situation, there is one disadvantage, and that is, the want of a running stream ; but this defect is in a great measure supplied by wells, or rather I should call them springs, for they rise very near the surface. And indeed the quality of this coast is pretty remarkable ; for in what part soever you dig, you meet, upon the first turning up of the ground, with a spring of pure water, not in the least salt, though so near the sea. The neighbouring forests afford an abundant supply of fuel ; every other convenience of life may be had from Ostia : to a moderate man, indeed, even the next village (between which and my house there is only one villa) would furnish all common necessities. In that little place there are no less than three public baths ; which is a great convenience if one happens to arrive home unexpectedly, or make too short a stay to allow time for preparing my own.

The whole coast is beautifully diversified by the joining or detached villas that are spread upon it,

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

tarum urbium faciem, sive mari sive ipso litore utare ; quod non numquam longa tranquillitas mollit, saepius frequens et contrarius fluctus indurat. Mare non sane pretiosis piscibus abundat, soleas tamen et squillas optimas suggerit. Villa vero nostra etiam mediterraneas copias praestat, lac in primis ; nam illuc e pascuis pecora conveniunt, si quando aquam umbramve <sup>1</sup> sectantur.

Justisne de causis eum tibi videor incolere, inhabitare, diligere secessum ? quem tu nimis urbanus es nisi concupiscis. Atque utinam concupiscas ! ut tot tantisque dotibus villulae nostrae maxima commendatio ex tuo contubernio accedat. Vale.

### XVIII

C. PLINIUS MAURICO SUO S.

QUIN a te iucundius mihi potuit iniungi, quam ut praeceptorem fratris tui liberis quaererem ? Nam beneficio tuo in scholam redeo, illam dulcissimam aetatem quasi resumo ; sedeo inter iuvenes, ut solebam, atque etiam experior, quantum apud illos auctoritatis ex studiis habeam. Nam proxime fre-

<sup>1</sup> umbramve *M Va*, umbramque *Ricc. F*.



## BOOK II. xvii.-xviii

which whether you are travelling along the sea or the shore, have the effect of a series of towns. The shore is sometimes, after a long calm, loose and yielding to the feet, though in general, by the winds driving the waves upon it, it is compact and firm. I cannot boast that our sea produces the more costly sorts of fish ; however, it supplies us with exceeding fine soles and prawns ; but as to provisions of other kinds, my villa pretends to equal even inland countries, particularly in milk ; for thither the cattle come from the meadows in great numbers whenever they seek shade or water.

Tell me now, have I not just cause to bestow my time and my affection upon this agreeable retreat ? Surely you are unreasonably attached to the pleasures of the town, if you have no hankering after it ; as I much wish you had, that to so many charms with which my favourite villa abounds, it might have the very considerable addition of your presence to recommend it. Farewell.

### XVIII

#### TO MAURICUS

WHAT can be more agreeable to me, than the office you have enjoined me, of finding a tutor for your nephews ? It gives me an opportunity of revisiting the scene of my education, and of turning back again, as it were, to the most pleasing part of my life. I take my seat, as formerly, among the young lads, and have the pleasure to experience the respect my character in eloquence meets with from them. I lately came in upon them, while they were loudly

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

quenti auditorio inter se coram multis ordinis nostri clare loquebantur ;<sup>1</sup> intravi, conticuerunt ; quod non referrem, nisi ad illorum magis laudem quam ad meam pertineret, ac nisi sperare te vellem posse fratris tui filios probe discere. Quod superest, cum omnes, qui profitentur, audiero, quid de quoque sentiam, scribam efficiamque, quantum tamen epistula consequi potero, ut ipse omnes audisse videaris.

Debeo enim tibi, debeo memoriae fratris tui hanc fidem, hoc studium, praesertim super tanta re. Nam quid magis interest vestra, quam ut liberi (dicerem tui, nisi nunc illos magis amares) digni illo patre, te patruo reperiantur ? quam curam mihi, etiamsi non mandasses, vindicassem. Nec ignoro suscipiendas offensas in eligendo praeceptore, sed oportet me non modo offensas, verum etiam simultates pro fratris tui filiis tam aequo animo subire quam parentes pro suis. Vale.

### XIX

C. PLINIUS CEREALI SUO S.

HORTARIS, ut orationem amicis pluribus recitem. Faciam, quia hortaris, quamvis vehementer addubitem. Neque enim me praeterit actiones, quae

<sup>1</sup> *MV, K:II*, iocabantur *RFDpra, K<sup>1</sup>, Müll.*

## BOOK II. xviii.-xix

conversing in presence of a large company of my own rank ; the moment I appeared, they were silent. I mention this for their honour, rather than my own ; and to let you see the just hopes you may conceive of your nephews obtaining a truly moral education. I purpose to hear all the several professors ; and when I have done so, I shall write you such an account of them, as will make you (as far as a letter can do it) imagine you have heard them yourself.

The faithful and zealous execution of so important a commission, is what I owe to the friendship that subsists between us, and to the memory of your brother. Nothing, certainly, is more your concern, than that his children (I would have said *yours*, but that I know you now look upon them even with more tenderness than your own) may be found worthy of such a father, and such an uncle ; and I should have claimed a part in that care, though you had not charged me with it. I am sensible, in choosing a preceptor I shall draw upon me the displeasure of all the rest of that profession : but when the interest of these young men is concerned, I esteem it my duty to hazard the displeasure, or even enmity of any man, with as much resolution as a parent would for his own children. Farewell.

## XIX

### TO CEREALIS

You advise me to recite my late speech before an assembly of my friends. I shall do so, since you advise it, though I have many scruples about it. For speeches delivered in court lose, I well know,

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

recitantur, impetum omnem caloremque ac prope nomen suum perdere, ut quas soleant commendare simul et accendere iudicum consessus, celebritas advocatorum, expectatio eventus, fama non unius actoris diductumque in partes audientium studium, ad hoc dicentis gestus, incessus, discursus etiam omnibusque motibus animi consentaneus vigor corporis. Unde accidit, ut hi, qui sedentes agunt, quamvis illis maxima ex parte supersint eadem illa quae stantibus, tamen hoc, quod sedent, quasi debilitentur et deprimantur. Recitantium vero praecipua pronuntiationis adiumenta, oculi, manus praepediuntur. Quo minus mirum est, si auditorum intentio languescit nullis extrinsecus aut blandimentis capta aut aculeis excitata.

His accedit, quod oratio, de qua loquor, pugna et contentiosa est. Porro ita natura comparatum est, ut ea, quae scripsimus cum labore, cum labore etiam audiri putemus. Et sane quotus quisque tam rectus auditor, quem non potius dulcia haec et sonantia quam austera et pressa delectent? Est quidem omnino turpis ista discordia, est tamen, quia<sup>1</sup> plerumque evenit, ut aliud auditores, aliud iudices exigant, cum alioqui iis<sup>2</sup> praecipue auditor adfici debeat, quibus idem, si foret iudex, maxime permoveatur.

<sup>1</sup> quia, *M V, K*, quae *Ricc. Fa*, quod *pr*.

<sup>2</sup> cum alioqui iis, *K*, his *M V*.

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<sup>a</sup> Cicero and Quintilian have laid down rules how far, and in what instances, this liberty was allowable. The latter mentions a witticism of Flavius Virginius, who asked one of

all their fire and force, and even almost their very name, by a recital. It is the array of jurors, the course of the bar, the suspense as to the event, the reputation of the rival orators concerned, the different parties formed amongst the audience in their favour; furthermore, it is the gestures, the gait, and even the striding to and fro of the speaker, whose energetic frame harmoniously interprets his every emotion,<sup>a</sup> which conspire to give a grace and spirit to what he delivers. Hence those who sit when they plead, though they have most of the advantages I just now mentioned in common with those who stand, yet from that single circumstance, weaken and depress the whole force of their eloquence. But when a speech is *read*, the eyes and hands of the reader, those important instruments of graceful elocution, being engaged, it is no wonder the hearer grows languid, while he has no external charms to captivate, or spurs to excite his attention.

To these general considerations, I must add that the speech in question is polemical and controversial, and, moreover, we instinctively suspect that what we wrote with labour will not be read with pleasure. For who is there so unprejudiced, as not to prefer the flowing and florid oration to one in the close and unornamented style? It is very unseemly there should be this discrepancy; however, there it is; the reason being that juries generally expect one manner of pleading, and audiences another; whereas in truth an audience ought to be affected only with those things which would strike them most were they in the place of the jury.

these orators “*Quot milia passuum declamasset?*” “How many miles he had declaimed.” (Melm.)

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Potest tamen fieri, ut quamquam in his difficultatibus libro isti novitas lenocinetur, novitas apud nostros; apud Graecos enim est quiddam quamvis ex diverso, non tamen omnino dissimile. Nam, ut illis erat moris leges, quas ut contrarias prioribus legibus arguebant, aliarum collatione convincere, ita nobis inesse repetundarum legi, quod postularem, cum hac ipsa lege tum aliis colligendum fuit; quod nequaquam blandum auribus imperitorum tanto maiorem apud doctos habere gratiam debet, quanto minorem apud indoctos habet. Nos autem, si placuerit recitare, adhibituri sumus eruditissimum quemque. Sed plane adhuc, an sit recitandum, examina tecum, omnesque, quos ego movi, in utraque parte calculos pone idque elige, in quo vicerit ratio. A te enim ratio exigitur, nos excusabit obsequium. Vale.

### XX

#### C. PLINIUS CALVISIO SUO S.

ASSEM para et accipe auream fabulam, fabulas immo; nam me priorum nova admonuit, nec refert, a qua potissimum incipiam.

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<sup>a</sup> Some think this speech was that which Pliny delivered in the Senate against M. Priscus. See Letter xi. of this book. (Melm.)

<sup>b</sup> This seems to have been the cry of the wandering story-

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BOOK II. xix.—xx

Nevertheless it is possible the objections which lie against this piece may be got over, by the attraction of its novelty—novelty, I mean, with respect to us; for the Greek orators have a method, though inversely applied, not altogether unlike what I made use of. They, when they would throw out a law, as contrary to some former one, habitually proved this by the analogy of other laws: similarly, I endeavoured to prove that the indictment I was putting forward <sup>a</sup> came within the provisions of the law relating to public extortions, by inference not only from that law itself, but from others. Those who are not experts, can have no taste for reasonings of this kind; but those who are, ought to be so much the more pleased with them. I shall endeavour therefore, if you persist in my reciting it to collect a judicious audience. But before you determine this point, I entreat you thoroughly to weigh the difficulties I have laid before you, cast up both sides of the account, and then decide according to the balance. For *you* will be expected to render a reckoning, whereas obedience to your commands will be a sufficient apology for *me*. Farewell.

XX

To CALVISIUS

“PAY a penny, and I’ll tell you a golden tale” <sup>b</sup>—nay, two or three, for one brings to my mind another. ’Tis no matter which I begin with, so take them as follows.

tellers who gained their livelihood by gathering an audience around them in public places, and amusing the gaping multitude by popular traditional tales, or wonderful stories of their own invention. (Melm.)

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Verania Pisonis graviter iacebat, huius dico Pisonis, quem Galba adoptavit. Ad hanc Regulus venit. Primum impudentiam hominis, qui venerit ad aegram, cuius marito inimicissimus, ipsi invisissimus fuerat! Esto, si venit tantum; at ille etiam proximus toro sedit, quo die, qua hora nata esset interrogavit. Ubi audiit, componit vultum, intendit oculos, movet labra, agitat digitos, computat; nihil. Ut diu miseram expectatione suspendit, 'Habes,' inquit, 'climactericum tempus, sed evades. Quod ut tibi magis liqueat, haruspicem consulam, quem sum frequenter expertus.' Nec mora, sacrificium facit, adfirmat exta cum siderum significatione congruere. Illa ut in periculo credula poscit codicillos, legatum Regulo scribit. Mox ingravescit; clamat moriens, 'O hominem nequam, perfidum, ac plus etiam quam perituum!' qui sibi per salutem filii peierasset. Facit hoc Regulus non minus scelerate quam frequenter, quod iram deorum, quos ipse quotidie fallit, in caput infelicitis pueri detestatur.

Velleius Blaesus, ille locuples consularis, novissima valetudine conflictabatur. Cupiebat mutare testa-



## BOOK II. xx

Verania, the wife of that Piso who was adopted by Galba, lay extremely ill: upon this occasion Regulus made her a visit. By the way, mark the assurance of the man, to visit a sick lady to whom he was so extremely odious, and to whose husband he was a declared enemy! Even barely to enter her house would have been impudent enough; but he had the confidence to go much farther, and very familiarly placed himself by her bed's side. He began with inquiring what day and hour she was born? Being informed of these particulars, he composes his countenance, fixes his eyes, mutters something to himself, counts on his fingers; nothing comes of it. After keeping the poor lady on tenterhooks, "You are," says he, "in one of your climacterics; however, you will get over it. But for your greater satisfaction, I will consult with a certain diviner, whose skill I have frequently experienced." Accordingly away he goes, sacrifices, and returns with the strongest assurances that inspection of the victim's entrails confirmed what he had predicted by astrology. Upon this the good woman, made credulous by her dangerous state, calls for her will, and gives Regulus a handsome legacy. Some time afterwards her distemper increased; and in her last moments she exclaimed against this perfidious, worse than perjured, wretch, who had wished every curse might befall his son, if what he promised her was not true. But such sort of imprecations are as common with Regulus as they are impious; and he continually devotes that unhappy youth to the curses of those gods by whom he swears falsely every day.

Velleius Blaesus, a person of consular dignity and remarkable for his immense wealth, in his last sick-

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

mentum. Regulus, qui speraret aliquid ex novis tabulis, quia nuper captare eum coeperat, medicos hortari, rogare, quoquo modo spiritum homini prorogarent. Postquam signatum est testamentum, mutat personam, vertit adlocutionem isdemque medicis: 'Quousque miserum cruciatis? Quid invidetis bonam mortem, cui dare vitam non potestis?' Moritur Blaesus et, tamquam omnia audisset, Regulo ne tantulum quidem.

Sufficiunt duae fabulae, an scholastica lege tertiam poscis? est, unde fiat.

Aurelia, ornata femina, signatura testamentum sumpserat pulcherrimas tunicas. Regulus cum venisset ad signandum, 'Rogo,' inquit, 'has mihi leges.' Aurelia ludere hominem putabat, ille serio instabat; ne multa, coëgit mulierem aperire tabulas ac sibi tunicas, quas erat induta, legare; observavit scribentem, inspexit, an scripsisset. Et Aurelia quidem vivit, ille tamen istud tamquam morituram coëgit. Et hic hereditates, hic legata, quasi mereatur, accipit!

'Ἀλλὰ τί διατείνομαι in ea civitate, in qua iampridem

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<sup>a</sup> The rhetoricians of the period set the fashion of using triplets in composition.

<sup>b</sup> This was an act of great ceremony, and the gala dress of Roman ladies being exceedingly costly, the legacy Regulus had the impudence to ask must have been considerable. (Melm.)

ness had an inclination to make some alterations in his will. Regulus, who had lately endeavoured to insinuate himself into his friendship, hoped to receive some advantage by the intended change, and accordingly applies himself to his physicians, and conjures them to exert all their skill to prolong the poor man's life. But the moment the will was signed, his rôle and style were changed: "How long," says he to these very physicians, "do you design to keep this poor fellow in misery? Since you cannot preserve his life, why grudge him an easy death?" Blaesus is since dead; and as if he had overheard every word that Regulus had said, he has not left him one farthing.

Will two stories serve you, or must you have a third, according to the canon of the schools?<sup>a</sup> If so, Regulus will supply you.

You must know then, that Aurelia, a lady of property, designing to execute her will, had dressed herself for that purpose in a very splendid manner.<sup>b</sup> Regulus, who was present as a witness, turned about to the lady, and, "Pray," says he, "leave me these fine clothes." Aurelia at first thought him in jest; but he insisted upon it very seriously, and, to make a long story short, obliged her to open her will, and insert this legacy; and though he saw her write it, yet he would not be satisfied till he read the clause himself. However Aurelia is still alive; though Regulus forced her to make this bequest, as though her death were imminent. And yet legacies and estates are conferred upon this abandoned man as if he really deserved them!

But why should I fret myself at this in a city

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

non minora praemia, immo maiora nequitia et improbitas quam pudor et virtus habent? Aspice Regulum, qui ex paupere et tenui ad tantas opes per flagitia processit, ut ipse mihi dixerit, cum consuleret, quam cito sestertium sescenties impleturus esset, invenisse se exta duplicia, quibus portendi, milies et ducenties habiturum. Et habebit, si modo, ut coepit, aliena testamenta, quod est improbissimum genus falsi, ipsis, quorum sunt illa, dictaverit. Vale.

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## BOOK II. xx

where impudence and iniquity have long received the same, do I say, even greater encouragement than modesty and virtue? Regulus is a glaring instance of this truth, who, from a state of indigence, has, by a train of the most villainous actions, arrived to such immense riches, that he once told me himself, upon consulting the omens to know how soon he should be worth sixty millions of sesterces, he found a double liver within the sacrificial victim, which portended that he should possess double that sum. And so he will, if he continues thus to dictate wills for other people; a sort of forgery, in my estimation, of all others the most infamous. Farewell.



## BOOK III

N 2

## LIBER TERTIUS

### I

C. PLINIUS CALVISIO RUFO<sup>1</sup> SUO S.

NESCIO, an ullum iucundius tempus exegerim, quam quo nuper apud Spurinnam fui, adeo quidem, ut neminem magis in senectute, si modo senescere datum est, aemulari velim; nihil est enim illo vitae genere distinctius. Me autem ut certus siderum cursus ita vita hominum disposita delectat, senum praesertim. Nam iuvenes confusa adhuc quaedam et quasi turbata non indecent, senibus placida omnia et ordinata conveniunt, quibus industria sera, turpis ambitio est.

Hanc regulam Spurinna constantissime servat: quin etiam parva haec, parva, si non cotidie fiant, ordine quodam et velut orbe circumagit. Mane lectulo continetur, hora secunda calceos poscit, ambulat milia passuum tria nec minus animum quam corpus exercet. Si adsunt amici, honestissimi sermones explicantur; si non, liber legitur, interdum

<sup>1</sup> RUFO *add. Havet ex Ricc.*



## BOOK III

### I

TO CALVISIUS RUFUS

I NEVER spent my time more agreeably, I think, than I did lately with Spurinna. I was so much pleased with his way of life, that if ever I should arrive at old age, there is no man whom I would sooner choose for my model. I look upon order in human actions, especially at that advanced period, with the same sort of pleasure as I behold the settled course of the heavenly bodies. In youth, indeed, a certain irregularity and agitation is by no means unbecoming; but in age, when business is unseasonable, and ambition indecent, all should be calm and uniform.

Spurinna religiously pursues the above rule of life, nay even in the details I shall describe, which one might call minute and inconsiderable did they not occur every day, he observes a certain periodical season and method. The first part of the morning he keeps his bed; at eight he calls for his shoes, and walks three miles, in which he enjoys at once contemplation and exercise. Meanwhile, if he has any friends with him in his house, he enters upon some polite and useful topic of conversation; if he is alone, somebody reads to him; and sometimes, too, when

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

etiam praesentibus amicis, si tamen illi non gravantur. Deinde considit, et liber rursus aut sermo libro potior; mox vehiculum ascendit, adsumit uxorem singularis exempli vel aliquem amicorum, ut me proxime. Quam pulchrum illud, quam dulce secretum! quantum ibi antiquitatis! quae facta, quos viros audias! quibus praeceptis imbuare! quamvis ille hoc temperamentum modestiae suae indixerit, ne praecipere videatur. Peractis septem milibus passuum iterum ambulat mille, iterum residet vel se cubiculo ac stilo reddit. Scribit enim et quidem utraque lingua lyrica doctissime; mira illis dulcedo, mira suavitas, mira hilaritas, cuius gratiam cumulat sanctitas scribentis.

Ubi hora balinei nuntiata est (est autem hieme nona, aestate octava), in sole, si caret vento, ambulat nudus. Deinde movetur pila vehementer et diu; nam hoc quoque exercitationis genere pugnat cum senectute. Lotus accubat et paulisper cibum differt; interim audit legentem remissius aliquid et dulcius. Per hoc omne tempus liberum est amicis vel eadem

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### BOOK III. i

he is not, if it is agreeable to his company. When this is over, he reposes himself, and again takes up a book, or else falls into discourse more improving than a book. He afterwards takes the air in his chariot, either with his wife (a lady of exemplary character) or with some friend; a happiness which lately was mine. How agreeable, how noble is the enjoyment of him in that hour of privacy! You would fancy you were hearing some worthy of ancient times, inflaming your breast with the most heroic examples, and instructing your mind with the most exalted precepts, which yet he delivers with such an infusion of his native modesty, that there is not the least appearance of dictating in his conversation. When he has thus taken a tour of seven miles, he gets out of his chariot and walks a mile more, after which he either reposes himself, or retires to his study and pen. For he is an accomplished writer of lyric verse, and that both in Greek and Latin. It is surprising what an ease and spirit of gaiety runs through his verses, which the moral virtue of the author renders still more acceptable.

When the baths are ready, which in winter is about three o'clock, and in summer about two, he undresses himself; and if there happens to be no wind, he walks about in the sun. After this he puts himself into prolonged and violent motion at playing ball: for by this sort of exercise, too, he combats the effects of old age. When he has bathed, he throws himself on his couch and waits dinner a little while, and in the meanwhile some agreeable and entertaining author is read to him. In this, as in all the rest, his friends are at full liberty to partake; or to employ themselves in any other manner more suitable

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

facere vel alia, si malint. Adponitur cena non minus nitida quam frugi in argento puro et antiquo ; sunt in usu et Corinthia, quibus delectatur nec adficitur. Frequenter comoedis cena distinguitur, ut voluptates quoque studiis condiantur. Sumit aliquid de nocte et aestate. Nemini hoc longum est ; tanta comitate convivium trahitur. Inde illi post septimum et septuagensimum annum aurium oculorumque vigor integer, inde agile et vividum corpus solaque ex senectute prudentia.

Hanc ego vitam voto et cogitatione praesumo ingressurus avidissime, ut primum ratio aetatis receptui canere permiserit. Interim mille laboribus conteror, quorum mihi et solacium et exemplum est idem Spurinna ; nam ille quoque, quoad honestum fuit, obiit officia, gessit magistratus, provincias rexit multoque labore hoc otium meruit. Igitur eundem mihi cursum, eundem terminum statuo idque iam nunc apud te subsigno, ut, si me longius evehi videris, in ius voces ad hanc epistulam meam et quiescere iubeas, cum inertiae crimen effugero. Vale.

### BOOK III. i

to their taste. You sit down to an elegant, yet frugal repast, which is served up in plain and antique plate. He uses likewise dishes of Corinthian bronze, which is his hobby, not his passion. At intervals of the repast he is frequently entertained with comedians, that even his very pleasures may be seasoned with letters; and though he continues there, even in summer, till the night is somewhat advanced, yet he prolongs the sitting over the wine with so much affability and politeness, that none of his guests ever think it tedious. By this method of living he has preserved his sight and hearing entire, and his body active and vigorous to his 78th year, without discovering any appearance of old age, but the wisdom.

This is the sort of life which I ardently aspire after; as I purpose to enjoy it, when I shall arrive at those years which will justify a retreat from business. In the meanwhile, I am harassed with a thousand affairs, in which Spurinna is at once my support and my example. For he too, as long as it became him, fulfilled the duties of public life, held the various offices of state, governed provinces, and by indefatigable toil merited the repose he now enjoys. I propose to myself the same course and the same term; and I give it to you under my hand that I do so, in order that, should you see me carried beyond that limit, you may produce this letter against me; and sentence me to repose whenever I can enjoy it without being charged with indolence. Farewell.

# THE LETTERS OF PLINY

## II

C. PLINIUS VIBIO<sup>1</sup> MAXIMO SUO S.

Quod ipse amicis tuis obtulissem, si mihi eadem materia suppeteret, id nunc iure videor a te meis petiturus. Arrianus Maturus Altinatium est princeps; cum dico princeps, non de facultatibus loquor, quae illi large supersunt, sed de castitate, iustitia, gravitate, prudentia. Huius ego consilio in negotiis, iudicio in studiis utor; nam plurimum fide, plurimum veritate, plurimum intelligentia praestat. Amat me, nihil possum ardentius dicere, ut tu. Caret ambitu; ideo se in equestri gradu tenuit, cum facile posset ascendere altissimum.

Mihi tamen ornandus excolendusque est. Itaque magni aestimo dignitati eius aliquid adstruere inopinantis, nescientis, immo etiam fortasse nolentis, adstruere autem, quod sit splendidum nec molestum. Cuius generis, quae prima occasio tibi, conferas in eum rogo; habebis me, habebis ipsum gratissimum debitorem. Quamvis enim ista non adpetat, tam grate tamen excipit, quam si concupiscat. Vale.

<sup>1</sup> VIBIO *add. Havel ex Ricc.*

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<sup>a</sup> Altinum was a town on the Adriatic coast, near Venice.

## BOOK III. ii

### II

#### TO VIBIUS MAXIMUS

I THINK I may claim a right to ask the same services of you for my friends, as I would offer to yours if I were in your station. Arrianus Maturus is a person of great eminence among the *Altinates*.<sup>a</sup> When I call him so, it is not with respect to his fortunes (which, however, are very considerable); it is in view to the purity, the integrity, the prudence, and the gravity of his manners. His counsel steers me in my affairs, and his judgement directs me in my studies; for truth, honour and understanding, are the shining qualities which mark his character. He loves me (and I cannot express his affection in stronger terms) with a tenderness equal to yours. As he is a stranger to ambition, he has contentedly remained in the Equestrian order, when he might easily have advanced himself into the highest rank.

It behoves me, however, to take care he be advanced and ennobled; and I would fain without his knowledge or expectation, nay, even perhaps contrary to his inclination, add to his dignity. But the post I would obtain for him should be something very honourable, and attended with no trouble. I beg when anything of that nature offers, you would confer it on him; it will be an obligation, which both he and I shall ever remember with the greatest gratitude. For though he has no aspiring wishes to satisfy, he will be as sensible of the favour, as if he had received it in consequence of his own desires. Farewell.

# THE LETTERS OF PLINY

## III

C. PLINIUS CORELLIAE HISPULLAE S.

CUM, patrem tuum, gravissimum et sanctissimum virum, suspexerim magis an amaverim, dubitem teque in memoriam eius et in honorem tuum unice diligam, cupiam necesse est atque etiam, quantum in me fuerit, enitar, ut filius tuus avo similis exsistat, equidem malo, materno; quamquam illi paternus etiam clarus spectatusque contigerit: pater quoque et patruus illustri laude conspicui. Quibus omnibus ita demum similis adulescet, si imbutus honestis artibus fuerit, quas plurimum refert a quo potissimum accipiat.

Adhuc illum pueritiae ratio intra contubernium tuum tenuit, praeceptores domi habuit, ubi est erroribus vel modica vel etiam nulla materia. Iam studia eius extra limen proferenda sunt, iam circumspiciendus rhetor Latinus, cuius scholae severitas, pudor, in primis castitas, constet. Adest enim adulescenti nostro cum ceteris naturae fortunaeque dotibus eximia corporis pulchritudo, cui in hoc lubrico aetatis non praeceptor modo, sed custos etiam rectorque quaerendus est.

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<sup>a</sup> Corellius Rufus. See i. 12.



## BOOK III. iii

### III

#### TO CORELLIA HISPULLA

It is not easy to determine whether my love or esteem were greater, for that grave and saintly man your father ;<sup>a</sup> while both in respect to his memory, and your own virtues, I have the tenderest value for you. Can I fail then to wish, and by every means in my power endeavour, that your son may grow to resemble his paternal, or (better still, to my thinking) his maternal grandfather? Though I express this preference, I am well aware his *paternal* grandfather was a man of great note and celebrity, as his father and father's brother were also of the highest distinction. The one method to train him up in the likeness of these valuable men is early to season his mind with polite learning and useful knowledge: and it is of the last consequence from whom he receives these instructions.

Hitherto, as is the rule with children, he has lived in your society, and had teachers at home, where he is exposed to few, I should rather say to no temptations. But he is now of an age for outdoor schooling, and it is time to look about for some professor of Rhetoric whose discipline and method, but above all whose morals, are well known. Amongst the many advantages for which our dear lad is indebted to nature and fortune, he has that of a most beautiful person; it is necessary, therefore, at this dangerous period of life, to find out one who will not only be his tutor, but his guardian and his guide.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Videor ergo demonstrare tibi posse Iulium Genitorem. Amatur a me ; iudicio tamen meo non obstat caritas hominis, quae ex iudicio nata est. Vir est emendatus et gravis, paulo etiam horridior et durior ut in hac licentia temporum. Quantum eloquentia valeat, pluribus credere potes ; nam dicendi facultas aperta et exposita statim cernitur. Vita hominum altos recessus magnasque latebras habet ; cuius pro Genitore me sponsorem accipe. Nihil ex hoc viro filius tuus audiet nisi profuturum, nihil discet, quod nescisse rectius fuerit, nec minus saepe ab illo quam a te meque admonebitur, quibus imaginibus oneretur, quae nomina et quanta sustineat.

Proinde faventibus diis trade eum praeceptori, a quo mores primum, mox eloquentiam discat, quae male sine moribus discitur. Vale.

### IV

C. PLINIUS CAECILIO<sup>1</sup> MACRINO SUO S.

QUAMVIS et amici, quos praesentes habebam, et sermones hominum factum meum comprobasse videntur, magni tamen aestimo scire, quid sentias tu.

<sup>1</sup> CAECILIO *add. Havet ex Ricc.*

## BOOK III. iii.-iv

I will venture to recommend Julius Genitor to you under that character. I love him, I confess: but my affection does by no means prejudice my judgement, on the contrary, it is in truth the effect of it. His behaviour is grave, and his morals irreproachable; perhaps something too severe and rigid for the libertine manners of these times. His qualifications in his profession you may learn from many others; for eloquence, as it is open to all the world, is soon discovered: but character lies more concealed, and out of the reach of common observation; and it is on *that* side I undertake to be answerable for my friend. Your son will hear nothing from this worthy man, but what will be for his advantage to know, nor learn anything of which it would be fitter he should be ignorant. He will represent to him as often, and with as much zeal as you or I should, what a glorious weight of ancestral reputation he has to support.

Pray, then, under the happiest auspices, place him with a tutor whose first care will be to form his manners, and afterwards to instruct him in eloquence; an attainment ill-acquired if with the neglect of moral improvements. Farewell.

### IV

#### TO CAECILIUS MACRINUS

THOUGH my friends here, as well as the town in general, seem to approve of my conduct in the affair I am going to mention, yet I set great store upon knowing your sentiments; and as I wished for your

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Nam, cuius integra re consilium exquirere optassem, huius etiam peracta iudicium nosse mire concupisco.

Cum publicum opus mea pecunia inchoaturus in Tuscos excucurrissem accepto ut praefectus aerari commeatu, legati provinciae Baeticae questuri de proconsulatu Caecili Classici advocatum me a senatu petierunt. Collegae optimi meique amantissimi de communis officii necessitatibus praelocuti excusare me et eximere temptarunt. Factum est senatus consultum perquam honorificum, ut darer provincialibus patronus, si ab ipso me impetrassent. Legati rursus inducti iterum me iam praesentem advocatum postulaverunt implorantes fidem meam, quam essent contra Massam Baebium experti, adlegantes patrocinii foedus. Secuta est clarissima senatus adsensio, quae solet decreta praecurrere. Tum ego 'Desino,' inquam, 'patres conscripti, putare me iustas excusationis causas attulisse.' Placuit et modestia sermonis et ratio.

Compulit autem me ad hoc consilium non solum consensus senatus, quamquam hic maxime, verum etiam alii quidam minores, sed tamen numeri. Venie-

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<sup>a</sup> See x. 8.    <sup>b</sup> Now Andalusia.    <sup>c</sup> See iv. 33.

### BOOK III. iv

advice before I engaged in it, so I am vastly desirous of your judgement now it is over.

Having obtained leave to be absent from my office as head of the treasury, I went into Tuscany to look after a public work which I am carrying on there at my own expense.<sup>a</sup> In the interval, deputies from the Province of Baetica<sup>b</sup> arrived, to complain of some grievances they had suffered under the government of Caecilius Classicus; and applied to the Senate that I might be appointed counsel for them. My very worthy and obliging colleagues represented on my behalf, the necessary engagements of our office, and endeavoured all they could to get me excused. Upon this the Senate passed a decree greatly to my honour; they ordered that I should be counsel for the province, provided the deputies could obtain my consent. At my return they were again introduced into the Senate, and there renewed their petition in my presence. They asked my protection, which they had experienced when I was their counsel against Baebius,<sup>c</sup> and alleged their claim upon me as my clients. I perceived the Senate was inclined to grant this petition by that unmistakable applause which is the usual forerunner of all their decrees. Whereupon I rose up and told the house that I no longer insisted upon the reasonableness of the excuse I had alleged: and they were pleased alike with the purport and the respectful modesty of my answer.

I was determined in this resolution, not only because I found it agreeable to the inclinations of the Senate (which indeed had great weight with me), but for many other, though less important, considerations. I reflected that our ancestors thought

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

bat in mentem priores nostros etiam singulorum hospitum iniurias accusationibus voluntariis exsecutos; quo deformius arbitrabar publici hospitii iura neglegere. Praeterea cum recordarer, quanta pro isdem Baeticis priore advocacy etiam pericula subissem, conservandum veteris officii meritum novo videbatur. Est enim ita comparatum, ut antiquiora beneficia subvertas, nisi illa posterioribus cumules. Nam quamlibet saepe obligati, si quid unum neges, hoc solum meminerunt, quod negatum est. Ducebar etiam, quod decesserat Classicus, amotumque erat, quod in eiusmodi causis solet esse tristissimum, periculum senatoris. Videbam ergo advocacy meae non minorem gratiam, quam si viveret ille, propositam, invidiam nullam. In summa computabam, si munere hoc iam tertio fungerer, faciliorem mihi excusationem fore, si quis incidisset, quem non deberem accusare. Nam, cum est omnium officiorum finis aliquis, tum optime libertati venia obsequio praeparatur.

Audisti consilii mei motus; superest alterutra ex parte iudicium tuum, in quo mihi aequae iucunda erit simplicitas dissentientis quam comprobantis auctoritas. Vale.

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<sup>a</sup> He had already prosecuted two provincial governors; Baebius Massa in 93 or 94 A.D., and Marius Priscus (see ii. II) in 100 A.D. The next year, the Baetici sought his assistance to impeach Claudius, on whose trial see iii. 9.

themselves obliged to engage voluntarily in defence of even particular persons, with whom they were united by the ties of hospitality, and that therefore it would be the more ungenerous to abandon a collective body, to whom I stood in the same relation. Besides, when I considered the danger as well as the fatigue I went through in the last cause I undertook for this province, I thought it fit to maintain the merit of my former services, by rendering a fresh one. For such is the disposition of mankind, you cancel all former benefits, unless you add to them a heap of subsequent favours; oblige people never so often, and, if you deny them on a single point, they remember nothing but that refusal. I considered likewise, that Classicus being dead, the great objection of imperilling a senator, was removed; and that in undertaking this defence, I should merit the same thanks as if he were alive, without the hazard of giving any offence. In a word, I reckoned if I now for the third time discharged such an office,<sup>a</sup> I could with a better grace excuse myself in future, should some one be impeached whom I might have personal reasons for declining to prosecute. For all our duties have their limits; and the best way of reserving to ourselves the liberty of refusing where we would, is to comply where we can.

Thus you have heard the motives which influenced me in this resolve; it now remains that you pronounce judgement for or against it; I shall be equally pleased by your sincerity, if you dissent from my view, and by the weight of your sanction, if you approve it. Farewell.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

### V

C. PLINIUS BAEBIO MACRO SUO S.

PERGRATUM est mihi, quod tam diligenter libros avunculi mei lectitas, ut habere omnes velis quaerasque, qui sint omnes. Fungar indicis partibus atque etiam, quo sint ordine scripti, notum tibi faciam; est enim haec quoque studiosis non iniucunda cognitio.

‘De iaculatione equestri unus’; hunc, cum praefectus alae militaret, pari ingenio curaque composuit. ‘De vita Pomponii Secundi duo’; a quo singulariter amatus hoc memoriae amici quasi debitum munus exsolvit. ‘Bellorum Germaniae viginti’; quibus omnia, quae cum Germanis gessimus bella, collegit. Inchoavit, cum in Germania militaret, somnio monitus. Adstitit ei quiescenti Drusi Neronis effigies, qui Germaniae latissime victor ibi periit, commendabat memoriam suam orabatque, ut se ab iniuria oblivionis adsereret. ‘Studiosi tres,’ in sex volumina propter amplitudinem divisi, quibus oratorem ab incunabulis instituit et perfecit.<sup>1</sup> ‘Dubii sermonis octo’ scripsit sub Nerone novissimis

<sup>1</sup> perfecit *Ricc. Fra, Müller, perficit vulg.*

<sup>a</sup> Consul 44 A.D. Wrote tragedies praised by Quintilian.

<sup>b</sup> Brother of Tiberius. Died, aged 30, from the effects of a fall from his horse.



## BOOK III. v

### V

#### TO BAEBIUS MACER

It is with much pleasure I find you are so constant a reader of my uncle's works, as to wish to have a complete collection of them ; and for that purpose desire me to send you an account of all the treatises he wrote. I will fill the place of an index and even acquaint you with the order in which they were composed : for that, too, is a sort of information not at all unacceptable to men of letters.

The first book he published was a treatise concerning the *Art of using a javelin on horseback* : this he wrote when he commanded a troop of horse, and it is drawn up with equal accuracy and judgement. *The life of Pomponius Secundus*,<sup>a</sup> in two volumes : Pomponius had a very great affection for him, and he thought he owed this tribute to his memory. *The history of the wars in Germany*, in twenty books, in which he gave an account of all the campaigns we were engaged in against that nation. A dream which he had when he served in the army in Germany, first suggested to him the design of this work. The phantom of Drusus Nero<sup>b</sup> (who extended his conquests very far into that country, and there lost his life) appeared to him in his sleep, and conjured him not to suffer his memory to be buried in oblivion. He has left us likewise *The Students*, in three books, divided into six volumes, owing to their length. In this work he takes the orator from his cradle, and leads him on till he has carried him up to the highest point of perfection in this art. In the last years of Nero's reign, when

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

annis, cum omne studiorum genus paulo liberius et erectius periculosum servitus fecisset. 'A fine Aufidi Bassi triginta unus.' 'Naturae historiarum triginta septem,' opus diffusum, eruditum nec minus varium quam ipsa natura.

Miraris, quod tot volumina multaque in his tam scrupulosa homo occupatus absolverit, magis miraberis, si scieris illum aliquandiu causas actitasse, decessisse anno sexto et quinquagensimo, medium tempus distentum impeditumque qua officiis maximis qua amicitia principum egisse. Sed erat acre ingenium, incredibile studium, summa vigilantia. Lucubrare Vulcanalibus incipiebat non auspicandi causa, sed studendi, statim a nocte multa, hieme vero hora septima vel, cum tardissime, octava, saepe sexta. Erat sane somni paratissimi, non numquam etiam inter studia instantis et deserentis.

Ante lucem ibat ad Vespasianum imperatorem (nam ille quoque noctibus utebatur) inde ad delegatum sibi officium. Reversus domum, quod reliquum temporis, studiis reddebat. Post cibum saepe, quem interdiu levem et facilem veterum more sumebat,

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<sup>a</sup> Died probably *circa* 60 A. D.

<sup>b</sup> This encyclopaedic work is extant.

<sup>c</sup> See iv. 24, n.

### BOOK III. v

the tyranny of the times made it dangerous to engage in studies of a more free and elevated spirit, he published *Linguistic Queries*, in eight books; *A Continuation*, in one book, of the thirty books of Aufidius Bassus'<sup>a</sup> history; and thirty-seven books of a *Natural History*<sup>b</sup>: this is a work of great compass and learning, and as full of variety as nature herself.

You will wonder how a man so engaged as he was, could find time to compose such a number of books; and some of them too upon abstruse subjects. But your surprise will rise still higher, when you hear, that for some time he engaged in the profession of an advocate, that he died in his fifty-sixth year, that from the time of his quitting the bar to his death he was engaged and trammelled by the execution of the highest posts, and by the friendship of his sovereigns.<sup>c</sup> But he had a quick apprehension, incredible zeal, and a wakefulness beyond compare. He always began to work at midnight when the August festival of Vulcan came round; not for the good omen's sake, but for the sake of study; in winter generally at one in the morning, but never later than two, and often at midnight. No man ever slept more readily, insomuch that he would sometimes, without retiring from his book, take a short sleep, and then pursue his studies.

Before day-break he used to wait upon Vespasian; who likewise chose that season to transact business. When he had finished the affairs which that emperor committed to his charge, he returned home again to his studies. After a short and light repast at noon (agreeably to the good old custom of our ancestors) he would frequently in the summer, if he was

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

aestate, si quid otii, iacebat in sole, liber legebatur, adnotabat excerpebatque. Nihil enim legit, quod non exciperet; dicere etiam solebat nullum esse librum tam malum, ut non aliqua parte prodesset. Post solem plerumque frigida lavabatur, deinde gustabat dormiebatque minimum; mox quasi alio die studebat in cenae tempus. Super hanc liber legebatur, adnotabatur et quidem cursim. Memini quendam ex amicis, cum lector quaedam perperam pronuntiasset, revocasse et repeti coëgis; huic avunculum meum dixisse, 'Intellexeras nempe.' Cum ille adnuisset: 'Cur ergo revocabas? decem amplius versus hac tua interpellatione perdidimus.' Tanta erat parsimonia temporis. Surgebat aestate a cena luce, hieme intra primam noctis et tamquam aliqua lege cogente.

Haec inter medios labores urbisque fremitum; in secessu, solum balinei tempus, studiis eximebatur. Cum dico balinei, de interioribus loquor; nam, dum destringitur tergiturque, audiebat aliquid aut dictabat. In itinere quasi solutus ceteris curis huic uni vacabat; ad latus notarius cum libro et

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### BOOK III. v

disengaged from business, repose himself in the sun ; during which time some author was read to him, from whence he made extracts and observations, as indeed this was his constant method whatever book he read : for it was a maxim of his, that "no book was so bad but some profit might be gleaned from it." When this basking was over, he generally went into the cold bath, and as soon as he came out of it, just took a slight refreshment, and then reposed himself for a little while. Then, as if it had been a new day, he immediately resumed his studies till dinner-time, when a book was again read to him, upon which he would make some running notes. I remember once, his reader having pronounced a word wrong, somebody at the table made him repeat it again ; upon which my uncle asked his friend if he understood it ? Who acknowledging that he did ; "why then," said he, "would you make him go back again ? We have lost by this interruption of yours above ten lines : " so chary was this great man of time ! In summer he always rose from supper by day-light ; and in winter as soon as it was dark : and this was a sort of binding law with him.

Such was his manner of life amidst the noise and hurry of the town ; but in the country his whole time was devoted to study without intermission, excepting only while he bathed. But in this exception I include no more than the time he was actually in the bath ; for all the while he was rubbed and wiped, he was employed either in hearing some book read to him, or in dictating himself. In his journeys, as though released from all other cares, he found leisure for this sole pursuit. A shorthand writer, with book and tablets, constantly attended

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

pugillaribus, cuius manus hieme manicis munie-  
bantur, ut ne caeli quidem asperitas ullum studiis  
tempus eriperet; qua ex causa Romae quoque sella  
vehebatur. Repeto me correptum ab eo, cur am-  
bularem. 'Poteris,' inquit 'has horas non per-  
dere'; nam perire omne tempus arbitrabatur, quod  
studiis non impertiretur. Hac intentione tot ista  
volumina peregit, electorumque commentarios cen-  
tum sexaginta mihi reliquit, opisthographos quidem  
et minutissime scriptos; qua ratione multiplicatur  
hic numerus. Referebat ipse potuisse se, cum pro-  
curaret in Hispania, vendere hos commentarios  
Larcio<sup>1</sup> Licino quadringentis milibus nummum, et  
tunc aliquanto pauciores erant.

Nonne videtur tibi recordanti, quantum legerit,  
quantum scripserit, nec in officiis ullis nec in amicitia  
principum fuisse, rursus, cum audis, quid studiis  
laboris impenderit, nec scripsisse satis nec legisse?  
Quid est enim, quod non aut illae occupationes im-  
pedire aut haec instantia non possit efficere? Itaque  
soleo ridere, cum me quidam studiosum vocant, qui, si  
comparer illi, sum desidiosissimus. Ego autem tantum,  
quem partim publica, partim amicorum officia distrin-  
gunt? quis ex istis, qui tota vita litteris adsident,

<sup>1</sup> Larcio Ricc. p, Müller, Largio M V D, K.

### BOOK III. v

him in his chariot, who, in the winter, wore a particular sort of warm gloves, that the sharpness of the weather might not occasion any interruption to his studies; and for the same reason my uncle always used a sedan chair in Rome. I remember he once reproved me for walking; "You might," said he, "not have lost those hours:" for he thought all was time lost that was not given to study. By this extraordinary application he found time to write so many volumes, besides one hundred and sixty which he left me, consisting of a kind of common-place, written on both sides, in a very small character; so that one might fairly reckon the number considerably more. I have heard him say that when he was comptroller of the revenue in Spain, Larcus Licinus offered him four hundred thousand sesterces for these manuscripts: and yet they were not then quite so numerous.

When you reflect upon the books he has read, and the volumes he has written, are you not inclined to suppose that he never was an official or a courtier? On the other hand, when you are informed how painstaking he was in his studies, are you not disposed to think that he read and wrote too little? For, on one side, what obstacles would not the business of a court throw in his way? And on the other, what is it that such intense application might not perform? I cannot but smile therefore when I hear myself called a studious man, who in comparison to him am a mere loiterer. But why do I mention myself, who am diverted from these pursuits by numberless duties both public and private? Where is he, among those whose whole lives are spent in study, who must not blush under the consciousness of being but a

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

collatus illi non, quasi somno et inertiae deditus, erubescat?

Extendi epistulam, quamvis hoc solum, quod requirebas, scribere destinassem, quos libros reliquisset; confido tamen haec quoque tibi non minus grata quam ipsos libros futura, quae te non tantum ad legendos eos, verum etiam ad simile aliquid elaborandum possunt aemulationis stimulis excitare. Vale.

### VI

C. PLINIUS ANNIO SEVERO SUO S.

Ex hereditate, quae mihi obvenit, emi proxime Corinthium signum modicum quidem, sed festivum et expressum, quantum ego sapio, qui fortasse in omni re, in hac certe perquam exiguum sapio; hoc tamen signum ego quoque intellego. Est enim nudum nec aut vitia, si qua sunt, celat aut laudes parum ostentat. Effingit senem stantem; ossa, muscoli, nervi, venae, rugae etiam ut spirantis apparent, rari et cedentes capilli, lata frons, contracta facies, exile collum, pendent lacerti, papillae iacent, recessit venter; a tergo quoque eadem aetas ut ante. Aerugo aes ipsum,<sup>1</sup> quantum verus color, indicat vetus et antiquum; talia denique omnia, ut

<sup>1</sup> ante. Aerugo aes ipsum *Stahl, Mus. Rhen. xxix. 365*, ut a tergo. Aes ipsum *codd., edd.*

<sup>a</sup> The making of the "Corinthian bronze," so much prized by Roman connoisseurs, had apparently long been a lost art. The story went that the alloy was produced by the fusing of gold, silver and bronze, when Mummius burnt Corinth, 146 B.C. It seems this bronze had a peculiar colour, and took a peculiar patina (*aerugo*).



### BOOK III. v.-vi

sluggard and a dreamer, compared with this great scholar ?

I have run out my letter, I perceive, beyond the extent I at first designed, which was only to inform you, as you desired, what treatises he has left behind him. But I trust this will not be less acceptable to you than the books themselves, as it may possibly not only raise your curiosity to read his works, but your emulation to copy his example by some attempts of the same nature. Farewell.

### VI

#### TO ANNIUS SEVERUS

I HAVE lately purchased with a legacy that was left me, a statue of Corinthian bronze. It is small, but pleasing, and finely executed, at least, if I have any taste ; which most certainly in matters of this sort, as perhaps in all others, is extremely defective. However, I think even I have enough to discover the beauties of this figure ; as it is naked, the faults, if there be any, as well as the perfections, are more observable. It represents an old man in a standing posture. The bones, the muscles, the veins, and wrinkles are so strongly expressed, that you would imagine the figure to be animated. The hair is thin and failing, the forehead broad, the face shrivelled, the throat lank, the arms languid, the breast fallen, and the belly sunk ; and the back view gives the same impression of old age. It appears to be a genuine antique, alike from its tarnish and from what remains of the original colour of the bronze.<sup>a</sup> In short, it is a performance so highly finished as to fix

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Ardebat ergo Domitianus et crudelitatis et iniquitatis infamia. Arripit Licinianum, quod in agris suis occultasset Corneliae libertam. Ille ab iis, quibus erat curae, praemonetur, si comitium et virgas pati nollet, ad confessionem confugeret quasi ad veniam; fecit. Locutus est pro absente Herennius Senecio tale quiddam, quale est illud, *Κεῖται Πάτροκλος*. Ait enim: 'Ex avvocato nuntius factus sum: recessit Licinianus.' Gratum hoc Domitiano adeo quidem, ut gaudio proderetur diceretque: 'Absolvit nos Licinianus.' Adiecit etiam non esse verecundiae eius instandum; ipsi vero permisit, si qua posset, ex rebus suis raperet, antequam bona publicarentur exsilium molle, velut praemium, dedit. Ex quo tamen postea clementia divi Nervae translatus est in Siciliam, ubi nunc profitetur seque de fortuna praefationibus vindicat.

Vides, quam obsequenter paream tibi, qui non solum res urbanas, verum etiam peregrinas tam sedulo scribo, ut altius repetam. Et sane putabam te, quia tunc afuisti, nihil aliud de Liciniano audisse quam relegatum ob incestum. Summam enim rerum nuntiat fama, non ordinem. Mereor, ut vicissim, quid in oppido tuo, quid in finitimis agatur (solent

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<sup>a</sup> Antilochus thus announces his death to Achilles, *Il.* xviii. 20.

## BOOK IV. xi

Hence Domitian lay under an imputation of cruelty and injustice, which extremely exasperated him. Licinianus then, being arrested by his orders on the charge of having concealed a freed-woman of Cornelia's on his country estate, was advised by the Emperor's emissaries, to seek mercy by a confession if he wished to avoid the last punishment; which he accordingly did. Herennius Senecio spoke for him in his absence, something in the style of that well-known Homeric phrase, "Dead is Patroclus!"<sup>a</sup> "Instead of an advocate," said he, "I must turn messenger: Licinianus offers no defence." This news was so agreeable to Domitian, that he could not forbear betraying his satisfaction: "Then," says he, "Licinianus has acquitted us." And went so far as to add, "We must not bear too hardly on him in his disgrace." He accordingly permitted him to carry off such of his effects as he could secure before they were confiscated, and, as it were, rewarded him, by the mild penalty of banishment. Licinianus was afterwards, by the clemency of the late emperor Nerva, transferred to Sicily, where he now gives lessons in rhetoric, and takes his revenge on Fortune by his prefatory remarks.

You see how obedient I am to your commands, by my ferreting out and sedulously communicating not only domestic but foreign news. I imagined, to be sure, as all this happened in your absence, that you had heard nothing about Licinianus beyond the fact of his banishment for incest. For rumour usually reports the upshot, not the course of an affair. I think I deserve in return a full account of all that happens in your town<sup>b</sup> and its neighbourhood; for

<sup>b</sup> Apparently Milan.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

enim notabilia quaedam incidere), perscribas, denique, quidquid voles, dum modo non minus longa epistula, nunties. Ego non paginas tantum, sed versus etiam syllabasque numerabo. Vale.

### XII

C. PLINIUS MATURO ARRIANO SUO S.

AMAS Egnatium Marcellinum atque etiam mihi saepe commendas; amabis magis commendabisque, si cognoveris recens eius factum. Cum in provinciam quaestor exisset scribamque, qui sorte obtigerat, ante legitimum salarii tempus amisisset, quod acceperat scribae daturus, intellexit et statuit subsidere apud se non oportere. Itaque reversus Caesarem, deinde Caesare auctore senatum consuluit, quid fieri de salario vellet. Parva, sed tamen quaestio. Heredes scribae sibi, praefecti aerari populo<sup>1</sup> vindicabant. Acta causa est; dixit heredum advocatus, deinde populi, uterque percommode. Caecilius Strabo aerario censuit inferendum, Baebius Macer heredibus dandum; obtinuit Strabo.

Tu lauda Marcellinum, ut ego statim feci. Quamvis enim abunde sufficiat illi, quod est et a principe et a senatu probatus, gaudebit tamen testimonio tuo.

<sup>1</sup> aerari populo *K*, aerario populoque *Fpra*, aerario populo *D*.

## BOOK IV. xi.-xii

occurrences constantly arise there worth relating ; however, write anything, provided you send me a letter as long as mine. But take notice, I shall count not only the pages, but even the very lines and syllables. Farewell.

### XII

#### TO MATURUS ARRIANUS

I KNOW you love Marcellinus ; as indeed you have frequently mentioned him to me with approbation ; but he will rise still higher in your affection and esteem when you learn what he has lately done. When he went Quaestor into one of the provinces, the secretary assigned to him by lot happening to die before his salary became due, Marcellinus saw, and decided, that he ought not to keep in his pocket the sum which had been given him in order to pay that salary. At his return therefore he applied to Caesar, who referred the consideration of what should be done with this money to the Senate. It was a question indeed of no great importance : however, a question it was. The heirs of the secretary claimed it for themselves, and the Prefects of the Treasury for the public. The cause was tried, and counsel were heard, who spoke extremely well on both sides. Caecilius Strabo moved that the money be paid into the Treasury ; Baebius Macer, that it be given to the heirs ; Strabo's motion was carried.

Pray compliment Marcellinus on this action, as I did immediately ; for though he is amply satisfied by the approval of the Emperor and the Senate, yet he will rejoice over a token of yours. Those who are

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Omnes enim, qui gloria famaue ducuntur, mirum in modum adsensio et laus a minoribus etiam profecta delectat. Te vero Marcellinus ita reveretur, ut iudicio tuo plurimum tribuat. Accedit his, quod, si cognoverit factum suum isto usque penetrasse, necesse est laudis suae spatio et cursu et peregrinatione laetetur. Etenim nescio quo pacto vel magis homines iuvat gloria lata quam magna. Vale.

### XIII

C. PLINIUS CORNELIO <sup>1</sup> TACITO SUO S.

SALVUM te <sup>2</sup> in urbem venisse gaudeo ; venisti autem si quando alias, nunc maxime mihi desideratus. Ipse pauculis adhuc diebus in Tusculano <sup>3</sup> commorabor, ut opusculum, quod est in manibus, absolvam. Vereor enim, ne, si hanc intentionem iam in finem laxavero, aegre resumam. Interim, ne quid festinationi meae pereat, quod sum praesens petiturus, hac quasi praecursoria epistula rogo. Sed prius accipe causas rogandi, deinde ipsum, quod peto.

Proxime cum in patria mea fui, venit ad me salutandum municipis mei filius praetextatus. Huic ego ‘Studes?’ inquam. Respondit, ‘Etiam.’

<sup>1</sup> CORNELIO *Ricc. (Havet), Bipons, om. rel.*

<sup>2</sup> te *pra, om. rel.*

<sup>3</sup> Tusculano *codd. edd., Tuscano Mommsen, sed cf. v. 6, 45.*

## BOOK IV. xii.-xiii

actuated by the desire of fame and glory are amazingly gratified by approbation and praise, even though it comes from their inferiors ; but Marcellinus has so high an esteem of you, as to attach the highest value to your judgement. Besides all which, when he finds that the news of his action has penetrated to your distant retreat, he cannot but exult for that his fame has travelled so widely and so far. For, I know not how it is, mankind are generally more pleased with an extensive than even a great reputation. Farewell.

### XIII

#### TO CORNELIUS TACITUS

I REJOICE that you are safely arrived in Rome ; for though I am always desirous to see you, I am more particularly so now. I purpose to continue a few days longer at my Tusculum estate in order to finish a little work which I have upon my hands. For I am afraid, should I put a stop to this design, now that it is so nearly completed, I should find it difficult to resume it. Meanwhile, that I may strike while the iron is hot, I send this letter, like an *avant-courier*, to request a favour of you, which I mean shortly to ask in person. But before I inform you what my request is, I must let you into the occasion of it.

Being lately at my native place, a young lad, son to one of my fellow-townsmen, made me a visit. "Do you go to school?" I asked him. "Yes," said he. "And where?" He told me, "At Milan."<sup>a</sup> "And

<sup>a</sup> About eighty miles from Comum, his own and Pliny's native town.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

‘Ubi?’ ‘Mediolani.’ ‘Cur non hic?’ Et pater eius (erat enim una atque etiam ipse adduxerat puerum): ‘Quia nullos hic praeceptores habemus.’ ‘Quare nullos? nam vehementer interest vestra, qui patres estis’ (et opportune complures patres audiebant), ‘liberos vestros hic potissimum discere. Ubi enim aut iucundius morarentur quam in patria aut pudicius continerentur quam sub oculis parentum aut minore sumptu quam domi? Quantulum est ergo collata pecunia conducere praeceptores, quodque nunc in habitationes, in viatica, in ea, quae peregre emuntur (omnia autem peregre emuntur), impenditis, adicere mercedibus? Atque adeo ego, qui nondum liberos habeo, paratus sum pro republica nostra quasi pro filia vel parente tertiam partem eius, quod conferre vobis placebit, dare. Totum etiam pollicerer, nisi timerem, ne hoc munus meum quandoque ambitu corrumpetur, ut accidere multis in locis video, in quibus praeceptores publice conducuntur. Huic vitio uno remedio occurri potest, si parentibus solis ius conducendi relinquatur, iisdemque religio recte iudicandi necessitate collationis addatur. Nam, qui fortasse de alieno negligentes, certe de suo diligentes erunt dabuntque operam, ne a me pecuniam [non]<sup>1</sup> nisi dignus accipiat, si accepturus et ab ipsis erit.

<sup>1</sup> [non] *incl. Bipons, K (Gesnero auct.), “aut non aut nisi delendum” Müller.*



## BOOK IV. xiii

why not here?" "Because" (said his father, who was present, and had in fact brought the boy with him), "we have no teachers." "How is that?" said I; "surely it nearly concerns you who are fathers" (and very opportunely several of the company were so) "that your sons should receive their education here, rather than any where else. For where can they be placed more agreeably than in their own country, or maintained in more modest habits and at less expense, than at home and under the eye of their parents? Upon what very easy terms might you, by a general contribution, procure teachers, if you would only apply towards raising a salary for them what you now spend on your sons' lodging, journeys, and whatever a man has to pay for when abroad (which means, paying for everything). Why, I, who have as yet no children myself, am ready to give a third part of any sum you shall think proper to raise for this purpose, for the benefit of our Commonwealth, whom I regard as a daughter or a parent. I would take upon myself the whole expense, were I not apprehensive that my benefaction might hereafter be abused and perverted to private ends; as I have observed to be the case in several places where teachers are engaged by the local authorities. The single means to prevent this mischief is, to leave the choice of the professors entirely in the breast of the parents, who will be so much the more careful to determine properly, as they shall be obliged to share the expense of maintaining them. For though they may be careless in disposing of another's bounty, they will certainly be cautious how they apply their own; and will see that none but those who deserve it shall receive my money, when they must at the

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Proinde consentite, conspirete maioremque animum ex meo sumite, qui cupio esse quam plurimum, quod debeam conferre. Nihil honestius praestare liberis vestris, nihil gratius patriae potestis. Educentur hic, qui hic nascuntur, statimque ab infantia natale solum amare, frequentare consuescant. Atque utinam tam claros praeceptores inducatis, ut finitimis<sup>1</sup> oppidis studia hinc petantur, utque nunc liberi vestri aliena in loca ita mox alieni in hunc locum confluant !'

Haec putavi altius et quasi a fonte repetenda, quo magis scires, quam gratum mihi foret, si susciperes, quod iniungo. Iniungo autem et pro rei magnitudine rogo, ut ex copia studiosorum, quae ad te ex admiratione ingenii tui **convenit**, circumspicias praeceptores, quos sollicitare possimus, sub ea tamen condicione, ne cui fidem meam obstringam. Omnia enim libera parentibus servo; illi iudicent, illi eligant; ego mihi curam tantum et impendium vindico. Proinde, si quis fuerit repertus, qui ingenio suo fidat, eat illuc ea lege, ut hinc nihil aliud certum quam fiduciam suam ferat. Vale.

<sup>1</sup> ut fin. *R M V*, Müller, ut in fin. *FDpa*, ut a fin. *r*, etiam fin. *coni. K*.

## BOOK IV. xiii

same time receive theirs too. Let my example then encourage you to unite heartily in this design; and be assured the greater the sum my share shall amount to, the more agreeable it will be to me. You can undertake nothing more advantageous to your children, nor more acceptable to your country. They will by this means receive their education where they receive their birth, and be accustomed from their infancy to inhabit and affect their native soil. May you be able to procure professors of such distinguished abilities, that the neighbouring towns shall be glad to draw their learning from hence; and as you now send your children to foreigners for education, may foreigners hereafter flock hither for their instruction."

I thought proper thus to lay open to you the rise of this affair, that you might be the more sensible how agreeable it will be to me, if you undertake the office I request. I entreat you, therefore, with all the earnestness a matter of so much importance deserves, to look out, amongst the great numbers of men of letters which the reputation of your genius brings to you, teachers to whom we may apply for this purpose; but it must be understood that I cannot make a binding agreement with any of them. For I would leave it entirely free to the parents to judge and choose as they shall see proper: all the share I pretend to claim is, that of contributing my care and my money. If therefore any one shall be found who relies upon his own talents, he may repair thither; but under the proviso that the said reliance is all he can count upon, so far as I am concerned. Farewell.

# THE LETTERS OF PLINY

## XIV

C. PLINIUS PATERNO SUO S.

TU fortasse orationem, ut soles, et flagitas et exspectas, at ego quasi ex aliqua peregrina delicataque merce lusus meos tibi prodo. Accipies cum hac epistula hendecasyllabos nostros, quibus nos in vehiculo, in balineo, inter cenam oblectamus otium temporis. His iocamur, ludimus, amamus, dolemus, querimur, irascimur, describimus aliquid modo pressius, modo elatius atque ipsa varietate tentamus efficere, ut alia aliis, quaedam fortasse omnibus placeant. Ex quibus tamen si non nulla tibi paulo petulantiora videbuntur, erit eruditionis tuae cogitare summos illos et gravissimos viros, qui talia scripserunt, non modo lascivia rerum, sed ne verbis quidem nudis abstinuisse; quae nos refugimus, non quia severiores (unde enim?), sed quia timidiores sumus. Scimus alioqui huius opusculi illam esse verissimam legem, quam Catullus expressit:

Nam castum esse decet pium poëtam  
ipsum, versiculos nihil necesse est,  
qui tunc denique habent salem et leporem,  
si sunt molliculi et parum pudici.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Catull.* xvi. 5.

## XIV

## TO PATERNUS

You expect and demand, perhaps, as usual, an oration ; but I am going to put into your hands, as if they were some choice bits of foreign merchandise, some of my poetical amusements. You will receive then with this letter a collection of my hendecasyllabic verses, which I write to while away an idle hour upon the road, in the bath, or at table. They express different moods—jesting, frivolous, amorous, melancholy, plaintive, or irate ; or give descriptions, in a style sometimes concise, and sometimes lofty. I endeavoured by this variety to hit different tastes with different pieces, and provide a few, perhaps, of general relish. If you should meet with any passages which may seem too free, your reading will supply you with my apology, in the example of those great and venerable names who have gone before me in the same kind of writing, who without scruple have employed not only the warmest descriptions, but the plainest terms. This, however, is a liberty I have not allowed myself ; not as pretending to more austerity (for why should I ?) but because, in truth, I have less courage. Nevertheless, I entirely approve of the rule which Catullus lays down for this kind of compositions :

“ Let the poet’s conduct be  
Free from wanton levity :  
Not so his Muse—her sportive lay  
Pleases most, when most she’s gay.”

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Ego quanti faciam iudicium tuum, vel ex hoc potes aestimare, quod malui omnia a te pensitari quam electa laudari. Et sane quae sunt commodissima, desinunt videri, cum paria esse coeperunt. Praeterea sapiens subtilisque lector debet non diversis conferre diversa, sed singula expendere nec deterius alio putare, quod est in suo genere perfectum. Sed quid ego plura? nam longa praefatione vel excusare vel commendare ineptias, ineptissimum est. Unum illud praedicendum videtur, cogitare me has nugas meas inscribere ‘hendecasyllabos,’ qui titulus sola metri lege constringitur. Proinde, sive epigrammata sive idyllia sive eclogas sive, ut multi, poëmatia seu quod aliud vocare malueris, licebit voces, ego tantum hendecasyllabos praesto.

A simplicitate tua peto, ut, quod de libello meo dicturus es aliis, mihi dicas; neque est difficile, quod postulo. Nam, si ‘hoc opusculum nostrum aut potissimum esset aut solum, fortasse posset durum videri dicere: ‘Quaere, quod agas’; molle et humanum est: ‘Habes, quod agas.’ Vale.

You must look upon it as an instance of the great value I set upon your judgement, that I venture to submit the whole to your examination, rather than select out of them some of the more finished pieces for your approbation. And, indeed, poems which are really excellent no longer seem so when they appear in company. But a sensible and discerning reader ought not to compare pieces of distinct sorts with one another, but examine each performance apart; and if a poem is perfect in its kind, not reckon it inferior to another of a different class. But I will say nothing more; for to excuse or recommend my foolish verses by a long preface, would be the excess of folly. I will only therefore premise farther, that I design to call these trifles of mine *Hendecasyllables*, a title which will cover any sort of poem composed in that measure. Call them, if you think proper, Epigrams, Idylls, Eclogues (as many others have), Little Poems; in a word, give them what name you please, I offer them only as *Hendecasyllables*.<sup>a</sup>

What I beg of your sincerity is, that you would speak your opinion of them to me, with the same freedom that you would to others. When I ask this, I think, I lay you under no difficulty. If, indeed, these little poetical essays were my only or chief productions, it might sound, perhaps, a little harsh to advise me to find something else to do; but you may with great delicacy and politeness tell me, I have something else to do. Farewell.

<sup>a</sup> The eleven-syllabled metre (made famous by Catullus) had been so largely employed for one theme, that "hendecasyllabics" became a synonym for erotic poetry.

# THE LETTERS OF PLINY

## XV

C. PLINIUS MINICIO<sup>1</sup> FUNDANO SUO S.

Si quid omnino, hoc certe iudicio facio, quod Asinium Rufum singulariter amo. Est homo eximius et bonorum amantissimus. Cur enim non me quoque inter bonos numerem? Idem Cornelium Tacitum (scis, quem virum) arta familiaritate complexus est. Proinde, si utrumque nostrum probas, de Rufo quoque necesse est idem sentias, cum sit ad connectendas amicitias vel tenacissimum vinculum morum similitudo. Sunt ei liberi plures. Nam in hoc quoque functus est optimi civis officio, quod fecunditate uxoris large frui voluit eo saeculo, quo plerisque etiam singulos filios orbitatis praemia graves faciunt; quibus ille despectis, avi quoque nomen adsumpsit. Est enim avus, et quidem ex Saturio Firmo, quem diliges ut ego, si ut ego propius inspexeris.

Haec eo pertinent, ut scias, quam copiosam, quam numerosam domum uno beneficio sis obligaturus; ad quod petendum voto primum, deinde bono quodam omine adducimur. Optamus enim tibi ominamurque in proximum annum consulatum; ita nos virtutes

<sup>1</sup> MINICIO *solus Ricc.*

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<sup>a</sup> Lit. "the rewards attaching to childlessness."



## BOOK IV. xv

### XV

#### TO MINICIUS FUNDANUS

IF I can pretend to judgement in any thing, it is undoubtedly in the singular affection which I have for Asinius Rufus. He is a person of the highest merit, and a devoted friend to good men—for why may I not venture to include myself among the good? He and Tacitus (to whose eminent virtues you are no stranger) are united in the strictest intimacy. If therefore you esteem Tacitus and myself, you cannot but have the same favourable sentiments of Rufus; for a similitude of manners is, you know, the strongest cement of friendship. He has several children. For in this, as in other respects, he has fulfilled the duty of a good citizen, that he has chosen to reap the full blessing of a fruitful marriage; and this in an age when even one child is thought a burthen, as it prevents that lucrative adulation which is usually paid to those who have none.<sup>a</sup> But he scorns such low views, and has added the title of grandfather to his paternal dignity; for which he is indebted to Saturius Firmus, a person whom you would esteem as much as I do, if you knew him as well.

My design in all this detail, is, to let you see, what a numerous family you may oblige by conferring a single favour: a favour which I am induced to solicit both by the wish of my heart, and a certain good omen for its fulfilment. For I wish, and augur too, that you shall be Consul the approaching year: and in this presage I am confirmed both by your own

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

tuae, ita iudicia principis augurari volunt. Concurrit autem, ut sit eodem anno quaestor maximus ex liberis Rufi, Asinius Bassus, iuvenis (nescio, an dicam, quod me pater et sentire et dicere cupit, adolescentis verecundia vetat) ipso patre melior. Difficile est, ut mihi de absente credas, quamquam credere soles omnia, tantum in illo industriae, probitatis, eruditionis, ingenii, studii, memoriae denique esse, quantum expertus invenies. Vellem tam ferax saeculum bonis artibus haberemus, ut aliquos Basso praeferre deberes; tum ego te primus hortarer moneremque, circumferres oculos ac diu pensitares, quem potissimum eligeres. Nunc vero—sed nihil volo de amico meo adrogantius dicere, hoc solum dico, dignum esse iuvenem, quem more maiorum in filii locum adsumas.

Debent autem sapientes viri ut tu tales quasi liberos a republica accipere, quales a natura solemus optare. Decorus erit tibi consuli quaestor patre praetorio, propinquis consularibus, quibus iudicio ipsorum quamquam adolescentulus adhuc iam tamen invicem ornamento est. Proinde indulge precibus meis, obsequere consilio et ante omnia, si festinare videor, ignosce, primum quia votis suis amor plerumque praecurrit, deinde quod in ea civitate, in qua

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## BOOK IV. xv

conspicuous merit, and the distinguishing judgement of the emperor. It is a further coincidence, that Asinius Bassus, the eldest son of Rufus, should attain the Quaestorship in the same year. I know not whether I ought to say (which, however, the father would have me both say and think, though the youth is too modest to allow of it) that he is an even better man than his father. Were I to represent his abilities, his probity, his learning, his genius, his application and his parts as great as you will most certainly experience them, you, who never yet suspected my veracity, would scarce conceive, not having yet met him, that he deserved the character. I wish our age so abounded in merit, as to supply some whom you might justly prefer to him. In that case I should be the first to advise you to look about and to consider for a long time where to fix your choice : but as it is—however I will not speak of my friend in too arrogant a strain. I will only say, he is a young man, who deserves you should look upon him in the same relation, as our ancestors used to consider their Quaestors, that is, as your son.

Men of your character for wisdom should choose their political children of the same cast they would wish nature to form their real ones. It will be an honour to your Consulship to have a Quaestor whose father has been Praetor, and whose relations Consuls, yet who, though but a youth, reflects back to his family (and that by their own confession) as much credit as he derives from it. Let me entreat you then to comply with my petition and my advice. Above all, if I seem premature, I beg you will pardon me, when you consider that affection commonly runs ahead of its wishes ; again, that in a State where

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

omnia quasi ab occupantibus aguntur, quae legitimum tempus expectant, non matura, sed sera sunt, deinde, quod rerum, quas adsequi cupias, praesumptio ipsa iucunda est.

Revereatür iam te Bassus ut consulem, tu dilige eum ut quaestorem, nos denique utriusque vestrum amantissimi duplici laetitia perfruamur. Etenim, cum sic te, sic Bassum diligamus, ut et illum cuiuscumque et tuum quemcumque quaestorem in petendis honoribus omni ope, labore, gratia simus iuvaturi, perquam iucundum nobis erit, si in eundem iuvenem studium nostrum et amicitiae meae et consulatus tui ratio contulerit, si denique precibus meis tu potissimum adiutor accesseris, cuius et suffragio senatus libentissime indulgeat et testimonio plurimum credat. Vale.

### XVI

C. PLINIUS VALERIO PAULINO SUO S.

GAUDE meo, gaude tuo, gaude etiam publico nomine; adhuc honor studiis durat. Proxime cum dicturus apud centumviros essem, adeundi mihi locus nisi a tribunali, nisi per ipsos iudices non fuit; tanta stipatione cetera tenebantur. Ad hoc quidam ornatus adulescens scissis tunicis, ut in frequentia

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<sup>a</sup> i.e., in this case, the following year; when Minicius would be Consul, and Bassus would attain the age (twenty-

## BOOK IV. xv.-xvi

every office is held on the principle of *first come first served*, appointments are not seasonable, but overdue when deferred until the legitimate time <sup>a</sup>; finally, that to antedate the achievement of one's desires is in itself a pleasure.

Allow Bassus then to revere you as already Consul, and do you in return esteem him as your Quaestor; and let me, who fervently love you both, enjoy a twofold happiness. For, as I so equally value Bassus and yourself that I shall assist with all my assiduity and credit both *him*, to whomsoever he may be Quaestor, and *your* Quaestor, be he who he may, when they stand for higher office; so it will be extremely agreeable to me if my twofold regard for my own friend, and for your Consular dignity, should centre my endeavours upon one and the same young man; if, in fine, my solicitations have *your* support, in whose suffrage the Senate most gladly acquiesces, and to whose testimony they attach the utmost value. Farewell.

## XVI

### TO VALERIUS PAULINUS

REJOICE, my friend, not only upon my account, but your own, and that of the public; for oratory is still held in honour! Being lately engaged to plead in a cause before the Centumviri, the crowd was so great that I could not get to my place, but by way of the tribunal and the very seats of the jury. And I have to add, that a young nobleman having got his tunic seven) at which a Roman became legally eligible for the office of Quaestor—the first step in the *cursus honorum*.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

solet, sola velatus toga perstitit et quidem horis septem. Nam tam diu dixi magno cum labore, sed maiore cum fructu. Studeamus ergo nec desidia nostrae praetendamus alienam. Sunt, qui audiant, sunt qui legant, nos modo dignum aliquid auribus dignum chartis elaboremus. Vale.

### XVII

C. PLINIUS ASINIO GALLO SUO S.

Et admones et rogas, ut suscipiam causam Corelliae absentis contra C. Caecilium, consulem designatum. Quod admones, gratias ago, quod rogas, queror. Admoneri enim debeo, ut sciam, rogari non debeo, ut faciam, quod mihi non facere turpissimum est. An ego tueri Corelli filiam dubitem? Est quidem mihi cum isto, contra quem me advocas, non plane familiaris, sed tamen amicitia. Accedit huc dignitas hominis atque hic ipse, cui destinatus est, honor; cuius nobis hoc maior agenda<sup>1</sup> reverentia est, quod iam illo functi sumus. Naturale est enim, ut ea, quae quis adeptus est, ipse quam amplissima existimari velit. Sed mihi cogitanti adfuturum me Corelli filiae omnia ista frigida et inania videntur.

<sup>1</sup> agenda *Ricc. FDpra, K*, habenda *MV*.

## BOOK IV. xvi.-xvii

torn, as will happen in a crowd, stood in nothing but his toga to hear me for seven hours together. For so long I was speaking; and with a success greater than my great fatigue. Come on then, my friend, and let us earnestly pursue our studies, nor screen our own indolence under pretence of that of the public. We shall find no lack, rest assured, of either hearers or readers, if only we elaborate compositions worth the hearing, and worth committing to parchment. Farewell.

### XVII

#### TO GALLUS

You acquaint me that Caecilius, the consul elect, has commenced a suit against Corellia, and earnestly beg me to undertake her cause in her absence. As I have reason to thank you for your information, so I have to complain of your entreaties: without the first, indeed, I should have been ignorant of this affair, but I want no solicitations to comply, where it would be most base in me to refuse; for can I hesitate a moment to defend a daughter of Corellius? It is true, indeed, you are calling me to oppose a man with whom I am on friendly, though not intimate, terms. He has further claims in his high rank, and in the mere fact of his prospective office, which I am the more bound to revere as having already filled it myself. For it is natural for a man to wish those offices should be reckoned illustrious, which he himself once possessed. Yet all these objections seem feeble and inane when I reflect that it is the daughter of Corellius whom I am to defend.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Obversatur oculis ille vir, quo neminem aetas nostra graviorem, sanctiorem, subtiliorem denique tulit; quem ego cum ex admiratione diligere coepissem, quod evenire contra solet, magis admiratus sum, postquam penitus inspexi. Inspexi enim penitus; nihil a me ille secretum, non ioculare, non serium, non triste, non laetum. Adulescentulus eram, et iam mihi ab illo honor atque etiam (audebo dicere) reverentia ut aequali habebatur. Ille meus in petendis honoribus suffragator et testis, ille in inchoandis deductor et comes, ille in gerendis consiliator et rector, ille denique in omnibus officiis nostris, quamquam et imbecillus et senior, quasi iuvenis et validus conspiciebatur.

Quantum ille famae meae domi, in publico, quantum etiam apud principem adstruxit! Nam, cum forte de bonis iuvenibus apud Nervam imperatorem sermo incidisset, et plerique me laudibus ferrent, paulisper se intra silentium tenuit, quod illi plurimum auctoritatis addebat; deinde gravitate, quam noras, 'Necesse est,' inquit, 'parcius laudem Secundum, quia nihil nisi ex consilio meo facit.' Qua voce tribuit mihi, quantum petere voto immodicum erat, nihil me facere non sapientissime, cum omnia ex consilio sapientissimi viri facerem. Quin etiam

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## BOOK IV. xvii

The image of that excellent person, than whom this age has not produced a man of greater dignity, rectitude, and penetration, rises on my mental vision. I began to love him out of admiration ; and contrary to what is usually the case, my admiration increased after I came to know him thoroughly. Which indeed I did ; for he had no merry or earnest thought, no mood grave or gay, that he concealed from me. When I was but a youth, he respected, and (I will even venture to say) revered me, as if I had been his equal. When I solicited any office, *he* supported me with his interest, and recommended me by his testimony ; when I entered upon it, *he* was my introducer and my escort ; while I exercised it, *he* was my guide and my counsellor. In a word, during my whole official career, though he was both infirm and elderly, he displayed the energy of a young man in robust health.

In private, in public, and at Court, how often has he advanced my reputation ! It happened once, that the conversation before the Emperor Nerva turned upon the hopeful young men of that time, and several of the company were pleased to mention me with applause ; Corellius sat for a little while silent, which gave what he said the greater weight ; and then with that air of dignity, to which you are no stranger, "I must be reserved," said he, "in my praises of Pliny, because he does nothing without my advice." By which single sentence he gave me a greater character than I would presume even to wish for, as he represented my conduct to be always such as wisdom must approve, since it was wholly under the direction of one of the wisest of men. Even in his last moments he said to his

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

moriens filiae suae, ut ipsa solet praedicare : ‘ Multos quidem amicos,’ inquit, ‘ tibi in longiore vita paravi, praecipuos tamen Secundum et Cornutum.’ Quod dum recorder, intellego mihi laborandum, ne qua parte videar hanc de me fiduciam providentissimi viri destituisse.

Quare ego vero Corelliae adero promptissime nec subire offensas recusabo ; quamquam non solum veniam me, verum etiam laudem apud istum ipsum, a quo, ut ais, nova lis fortasse ut feminae intenditur, arbitror consecuturum, si haec eadem in actione, latius scilicet et uberius, quam epistularum angustiae sinunt, contigerit mihi vel in excusationem vel etiam in commendationem meam dicere. Vale.

### XVIII

C. PLINIUS ARRIO ANTONINO SUO S.

QUEMADMODUM magis adprobare tibi possum, quantopere mirer epigrammata tua Graeca, quam quod quaedam aemulari Latine et exprimere temptavi? in deterius quidem. Accidit hoc primum imbecillitate ingenii mei, deinde inopia ac potius, ut Lucretius ait, ‘ egestate patrii sermonis.’<sup>1</sup> Quodsi haec, quae sunt et Latina et mea, habere tibi aliquid venustatis videbuntur, quantum putas inesse iis gratiae, quae mihi et a te et Graece proferuntur? Vale.

<sup>1</sup> *Lucr.* i. 832.

## BOOK IV. xvii.—xviii

daughter (as she often mentions), "I have in the course of a long life raised up many friends to you; but there is none that you may more assuredly depend upon, than Pliny and Cornutus." A remark I cannot call to mind without perceiving how earnestly I must endeavour not to belie in any wise the forecast of one so gifted with prevision.

I shall therefore most readily appear for Corellia in this affair; nor shrink from the risk of giving offence by doing so. Though I think the very man who is bringing what you call "this novel form of suit" (possibly as it is against a woman), will not only excuse but applaud me, if I have the opportunity of stating these same reasons, by way of apology or maybe recommendation (more at large, of course, than the limits of a letter permit), in my speech to the jury. Farewell.

### XVIII

#### TO ARRIUS ANTONINUS

CAN I give you a stronger proof how much I admire your Greek epigrams, than by having endeavoured to imitate and express some of them in Latin?—to their detriment, I confess. This inferiority results firstly from the weakness of my poetic genius; secondly from the poverty, or, rather, as Lucretius has it, "the destitution of our mother-tongue." But if these poems, even when translated, and translated by me, retain for you some measure of their beauty, what must their charms be, do you imagine, when they are presented to me in Greek, and in Greek composed by you? Farewell.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

### XIX

#### C. PLINIUS CALPURNIAE HISPULLAE SUAE S.

CUM sis pietatis exemplum fratremque optimum et amantissimum tui pari caritate dilexeris filiamque eius ut tuam diligas nec tantum amitae ei, verum etiam patris amissi adfectum repraesentes, non dubito maximo tibi gaudio fore, cum cognoveris dignam patre, dignam te, dignam avo evadere. Summum est acumen, summa frugalitas, amat me, quod castitatis indicium est. Accedit his studium litterarum, quod ex mei caritate concepit. Meos libellos habet, lectitat, ediscit etiam. Qua illa sollicitudine, cum videor acturus, quanto, cum egi, gaudio adficitur ! Disponit, qui nuntient sibi, quem adsensum, quos clamores excitarim, quem eventum iudicii tulerim. Eadem, si quando recito, in proximo discreta velo sedet laudesque nostras avidissimis auribus excipit. Versus quidem meos cantat etiam formatque cithara non artifice aliquo docente, sed amore, qui magister est optimus.

His ex causis in spem certissimam adducor perpetuam nobis maioremque in dies futuram esse concordiam. Non enim aetatem meam aut corpus, quae paulatim occidunt ac senescunt, sed gloriam diligit. Nec aliud decet tuis manibus educatam, tuis prae-

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<sup>a</sup> Calpurnia, Pliny's wife.

<sup>b</sup> Fabatus.

## BOOK IV. xix

### XIX

#### TO CALPURNIA HISPULLA

As you are an exemplary instance of tender regard to your family in general, and to your late excellent brother in particular, whose warm attachment you returned with an equal fondness : and have not only shewn the affection of an aunt, but supplied that of a lost father, to his daughter<sup>a</sup> ; you will hear, I am persuaded, with infinite pleasure, that she behaves worthy of her father, her grandfather,<sup>b</sup> and yourself. She is incomparably discerning, incomparably thrifty ; while her love for her husband betokens a chaste nature. Her affection to me has given her a turn to books ; and my compositions, which she takes a pleasure in reading, and even getting by heart, are continually in her hands. How full of solicitude is she when I am entering upon any cause ! How kindly does she rejoice with me when it is over ! When I am pleading, she stations messengers to inform her from time to time how I am heard, what applauses I receive, and what success attends the cause. When at any time I recite my works, she sits close at hand, concealed behind a curtain, and greedily overhears my praises. She sings my verses and sets them to her lyre, with no other master but Love, the best instructor.

From these circumstances I draw my most assured hopes, that the harmony between us will increase with our days, and be as lasting as our lives. For it is not my youth or my person, which time gradually impairs ; it is my glory of which she is enamoured. But what else could be expected from one who was

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

ceptis institutam, quae nihil in contubernio tuo viderit nisi sanctum honestumque, quae denique amare me ex tua praedicatione consueverit. Nam, cum matrem meam parentis loco vereretur, me a pueritia statim formare, laudare talemque, qualis nunc uxori meae videor, ominari solebas. Certatim ergo tibi gratias agimus, ego, quod illam mihi, illa, quod me sibi dederis, quasi invicem elegeris. Vale.

### XX

C. PLINIUS NONIO MAXIMO SUO S.

QUID senserim de singulis libris tuis, notum tibi, ut quemque perlegeram, feci; accipe nunc, quid de universis generaliter iudicem. Est opus pulchrum, validum, acre, sublime, varium, elegans, purum, figuratum, spatiosum etiam et cum magna tua laude diffusum, in quo tu ingenii simul dolorisque velis latissime vectus es; et horum utrumque invicem adiumento fuit. Nam dolori sublimitatem et magnificentiam ingenium, ingenio vim et amaritudinem dolor addidit. Vale.

### XXI

C. PLINIUS VELIO CEREALI SUO S.

TRISTEM et acerbum casum Helvidiarum sororum! Utraque a partu, utraque filiam enixa decessit.

## BOOK IV. xix.-xxi

trained by your hands, and formed by your instructions; who was surrounded under your roof with all that is pious and moral, and had learned to love me from your account of my character? For while you honoured my mother as if she were your own, so you formed and encouraged me from infancy, pre-saging that I should become all that my wife now thinks I am. Accept therefore of our mutual thanks, that you have given us to each other, and, as it were, chosen the one for the other. Farewell.

### XX

#### TO NONIUS MAXIMUS

I HAVE already acquainted you with my opinion of each separate part of your work, as I perused it; I must now tell you my general thoughts of the whole. It is a strong and beautiful performance; it is vigorous, sublime, diversified, elegant, chaste, and full of imagery: moreover, its copious and diffusive eloquence raises a very high idea of the author. You seem borne away on the full sails of a strong imagination and deep sorrow, which mutually assist and heighten each other; for your genius gives sublimity and majesty to your sorrow; and your sorrow adds strength and poignancy to your genius. Farewell.

### XXI

#### TO VELIUS CEREALIS

How severe a fate has attended the daughters of Helvidius! These two sisters are both dead in child-bed, after having each of them been delivered

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Adficior dolore nec tamen supra modum doleo ; ita mihi luctuosum videtur, quod puellas honestissimas in flore primo fecunditas abstulit. Angor infantium sorte, quae sunt parentibus statim, et dum nascuntur, orbatae, angor optimorum maritorum, angor etiam meo nomine. Nam patrem illarum defunctum quoque perseverantissime diligo, ut actione mea librisque testatum est ; cui nunc unus ex tribus liberis superest domumque pluribus adminiculis paulo ante fundatam desolatus fulcit ac sustinet.

Magno tamen fomento dolor meus acquiescet, si hunc saltem fortem et incolumem paremque illi patri, illi avo fortuna servaverit. Cuius ego pro salute, pro moribus hoc sum magis anxius, quod unicus factus est. Nosti in amore mollitiam animi mei, nosti metus ; quo minus te mirari oportebit, quod plurimum timeam, de quo plurimum spero. Vale.

### XXII

C. PLINIUS SEMPRONIO RUFO SUO S.

INTERFUI principis optimi cognitioni in consilium adsumptus. Gymnicus agon apud Viennenses ex cuiusdam testamento celebrabatur. Hunc Trebonius

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<sup>a</sup> See ix. 13.

<sup>b</sup> The famous Helvidius Priscus, put to death in exile under Vespasian.



## BOOK IV. xxi.-xxii

of a girl. This misfortune pierces me with keen, yet not excessive sorrow; for indeed, to see two such amiable young ladies fall a sacrifice to their fruitfulness in the prime and flower of their years, is a misfortune which I cannot too greatly lament. I grieve for the unhappy condition of the poor infants, who are thus become orphans from their birth; I grieve for the sake of the excellent husbands of these ladies; and I grieve, too, for my own. The affection I bear to the memory of their late father, is inviolable, as my defence of him in the Senate,<sup>a</sup> and all my writings will witness for me. Of three children which survived him there now remains but one; and his family that had lately so many noble supports, rests only upon a single mourner!

It will, however, be a great mitigation of my affliction, if Fortune shall kindly spare that *one*, and render him worthy of his father, and grandfather<sup>b</sup>; and I am so much the more anxious for his welfare and good conduct, as he is the only scion of the family remaining. You know the softness and solicitude of my heart where I have any tender attachments: you must not wonder then, that I have many fears, where I have great hopes. Farewell.

## XXII

### TO SEMPRONIUS RUFUS

I LATELY attended our excellent Emperor as one of his assessors, in a cause wherein he himself presided. A certain person left by his will a fund for the establishment of gymnastic games at Vienna.<sup>c</sup>

<sup>c</sup> In Gallia Narbonensis, now Vienne.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Rufinus, vir egregius nobisque amicus, in duumviratu suo<sup>1</sup> tollendum abolendumque curavit. Negabatur ex auctoritate publica fecisse. Egit ipse causam non minus feliciter quam diserte. Commendabat actionem, quod tamquam homo Romanus et bonus civis in negotio suo mature et graviter loquebatur. Cum sententiae perrogarentur, dixit Iunius Mauricus, quo viro nihil firmitus, nihil verius, non esse restituendum Viennensibus agona; adiecit: 'Vellem etiam Romae tolli posset.'

Constanter, inquis, et fortiter. Quidni? sed hoc a Maurico novum non est. Idem apud Nervam imperatorem non minus fortiter. Cenabat Nerva cum paucis; Veiento proximus atque etiam in sinu recumbebat. Dixi omnia, cum hominem nominavi. Incidit sermo de Catullo Messalino, qui luminibus orbatus<sup>2</sup> ingenio saevo mala caecitatis addiderat. Non verebatur, non erubescibat, non miserebatur; quo saepius a Domitiano non secus ac tela, quae et ipsa caeca et improvida feruntur, in optimum quemque contorquebatur. De huius nequitia sanguinariisque sententiis in commune omnes super cenam loquebantur, cum ipse imperator, 'Quid putamus passurum fuisse, si viveret?' Et Mauricus: 'Nobiscum cenaret.'

<sup>1</sup> suo *Ricc. Fpa, Müller, om. MVD, K.*

<sup>2</sup> orbatus *Ricc. Fa, K, Kukula, Merrill, captus MV, Müller.*

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<sup>a</sup> The Duumviri were two magistrates who exercised in their respective corporations the same functions as the Consuls at Rome; they were chosen out of the body of Decuriones, or local senators.

<sup>b</sup> An infamous sycophant and informer under Domitian.

<sup>c</sup> Another notorious informer, whom Juvenal couples with Veiento.

## BOOK IV. xxii

These my worthy friend Trebonius Rufinus, when he exercised the office of Duumvir,<sup>a</sup> had ordered to be totally abolished; and it was now alleged that he had no official power to do so. He pleaded his own cause as successfully as eloquently; and what particularly recommended his speech was, that he delivered it with the deliberate gravity proper to a true Roman and a good citizen in dealing with a personal matter. When the sentiments of the assessors were taken, Junius Mauricus (who in resolution and integrity has no superior) pronounced that these games should not be restored to the people of Vienna; "and I would," added he, "they could be abolished at Rome too!"

This, you will say, was an instance of great firmness and courage, but it is nothing new in Mauricus. He gave as strong a proof of his courage before the Emperor Nerva. Being at supper one evening with that prince and a few select friends, Veiento<sup>b</sup> was placed next to the Emperor, and actually reclined upon his bosom. To name the man is to say all! The discourse happened to turn upon Catullus Messalinus,<sup>c</sup> who had a soul as dark as his body; for he was not only cursed with want of sight, but want of humanity. As he was uninfluenced either by fear, shame, or compassion, Domitian all the more frequently used him to fling against every man of worth, precisely as a dart, that flies sightless and senseless to its mark. The company were talking of the sanguinary counsels and infamous practices of this creature. "And what," said the Emperor, "would have been his fate had he lived till now?" "He would be supping with us," replied Mauricus.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Longius abii, libens tamen. Placuit agona tolli, qui mores Viennensium infecerat ut noster hic omnium. Nam Viennensium vitia intra ipsos residunt, nostra late vagantur, utque in corporibus sic in imperio gravissimus est morbus, qui a capite diffunditur. Vale.

### XXIII

C. PLINIUS POMPONIO BASSO SUO S.

MAGNAM cepi voluptatem, cum ex communibus amicis cognovi te, ut sapientia tua dignum est, et disponere otium et ferre, habitare amoenissime et nunc terra, nunc mari corpus agitare, multum disputare, multum audire, multum lectitare, cumque plurimum scias, cotidie tamen aliquid addiscere. Ita senescere oportet virum, qui magistratus amplissimos gesserit, exercitus rexerit totumque se reipublicae, quam diu decebat, obtulerit. Nam et prima vitae tempora et media patriae, extrema nobis impertire debemus, ut ipsae leges monent, quae maiorem annis [LX]<sup>1</sup> otio reddunt. Quando mihi licebit, quando per aetatem honestum erit imitari istud pulcherrimae quietis exemplum? quando secessus mei non desidia nomen, sed tranquillitatis accipient? Vale.

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<sup>1</sup> LX *add. Bipons, et ed. qua usus est Melmoth.*

<sup>a</sup> A senator was not obliged to attend the business of the house, after that age. (Melmoth.)

## BOOK IV. xxii.—xxiii

But to return from this long digression, into which, however, I did not fall undesignedly. It was determined these games should be suppressed, which had greatly infected the manners of the people of Vienna; as they have universally had the same effect among us. ' But the vices of the Viennenses are confined within their own walls; ours spread far and wide; and it is in the body politic, as in the natural, those disorders are most dangerous that flow from the head. Farewell.

### XXIII

#### TO POMPONIUS BASSUS

I HAVE heard with great pleasure from our common friends, that you support and dispose of your leisure in retirement, as becomes a man of your distinguished wisdom; that you inhabit a most delightful spot, take exercise by land and sea, and mix learned conferences with much reading; and are daily increasing that immense fund of knowledge you already possess. To grow old in this way behoves one who has discharged the highest civil offices, commanded an army, and who gave himself wholly up to the service of the Commonwealth, as long as it became him to do so. Our youth and manhood we owe to our country, but our declining age is due to ourselves; as the laws themselves seem to suggest, which consign us to retirement, when we are arrived beyond our sixtieth year.<sup>a</sup> How do I long for the time when I shall enjoy that happy privilege! When my years will justify my following the example of your honourable repose! When my retirement shall not be termed indolence, but calm! Farewell.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

### XXIV

C. PLINIUS FABIO VALENTI SUO S.

PROXIME cum apud centumviros in quadruplici iudicio dixissem, subiit recordatio egisse me iuvenem aequae in quadruplici. Processit animus, ut solet, longius; coepi reputare, quos in hoc iudicio, quos in illo socios laboris habuissem. Solus eram, qui in utroque dixissem. Tantas conversiones aut fragilitas mortalitatis aut fortunae mobilitas facit. Quidam ex iis, qui tunc egerant, decesserunt, exsulant alii, huic aetas et valetudo silentium suavit, hic sponte beatissimo otio fruitur, alius exercitum regit, illum civilibus officiis principis amicitia exemit.

Circa nos ipsos quam multa mutata sunt! Studiis processimus, studiis periclitati sumus rursusque processimus. Profuerunt nobis bonorum amicitiae, bonorum obfuerunt iterumque prosunt. Si computes annos, exiguum tempus, si vices rerum, aevum putes; quod potest esse documento nihil desperare, nulli rei fidere, cum videamus tot varietates tam volubili orbe circumagi. Mihi autem familiare est omnes cogitationes meas tecum communicare iisdemque

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<sup>a</sup> See i. 18 n.

<sup>b</sup> The term *amicitia Caesaris* or *principis*, denoted a semi-official relation, involving personal attendance on the Emperor. Cf. iii. 5.

<sup>c</sup> By rendering Pliny suspect to Domitian (iii. 11, vii. 27).

## BOOK IV. xxiv

### XXIV

#### TO FABIVS VALENS

AFTER pleading the other day before the Centumviri sitting as one court, I recollected having pleaded as a youngster before the same fourfold court,<sup>a</sup> I could not forbear, as usual, to pursue the reflection my mind had started; I began to reckon up the advocates who had shared my labours in the present and in the former cause, and I found I was the only person remaining who had been counsel in both: such changes does the fragile nature of mortals, or the vicissitudes of Fortune, produce! Death had removed some; banishment others; age and infirmities had silenced those, while these had voluntarily withdrawn to enjoy the blessings of retirement; *one* was at the head of an army; and the position of friend to the emperor<sup>b</sup> had exempted *another* from civil employments.

What turns of fortune have I experienced in my own person! It was my profession that first raised me; it was my profession that endangered me; and it was my profession that advanced me again. Once the friendships of good men did me much service; they proved afterward extremely prejudicial to my interest,<sup>c</sup> and now they benefit me again. If you compute the years in which all this has happened, it is but a little while; if you number the vicissitudes, it seems an age. This should teach us to check both our despair and presumption, when we observe such a variety of events roll round in so swift and narrow a circle. It is my custom to communicate to you all my thoughts, and to set before

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

te vel praeceptis vel exemplis monere, quibus ipse me moneo; quae ratio huius epistolae fuit. Vale.

### XXV

C. PLINIUS MESSIO MAXIMO SUO S.

SCRIPSERAM tibi verendum esse, ne ex tacitis suffragiis vitium aliquod existeret. Factum est. Proximis comitiis in quibusdam tabellis multa iocularia atque etiam foeda dictu, in una vero pro candidatorum nominibus suffragatorum nomina inventa sunt. Excanduit senatus magnoque clamore ei, qui scripsisset, iratum principem est comprecatus. Ille tamen fefellit et latuit, fortasse etiam inter indignantes fuit.

Quid hunc putamus domi facere, qui in tanta re tam serio tempore tam scurriliter ludat, qui denique omnino in senatu dicax et urbanus et bellus est? Tantum licentiae pravis ingeniis adicit illa fiducia: quis enim sciet? Poposcit tabellas, stilum accepit, demisit caput, neminem veretur, se contemnit. Inde ista ludibria scaena et pulpito digna. Quo te veritas? quae remedia conquiras? ubique vitia remediis fortiora. Ἀλλὰ ταῦτα τῷ ὑπὲρ ἡμᾶς μέλῃσει, cui

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<sup>a</sup> iii. 20.



## BOOK IV. xxiv.—xxv

you the same rules and examples by which I regulate my own conduct: and such was my design in this letter. Farewell.

### XXV

#### TO MESSIUS MAXIMUS

I MENTIONED to you in a former<sup>a</sup> letter, that I apprehended the method of voting by ballot would lead to some abuse, and so it has proved. At the last election of magistrates, upon some of the tablets were written several pieces of pleasantry, and even indecencies; in one particularly, instead of the names of the candidates, ~~was~~ inserted the names of their supporters. The Senate was extremely exasperated, and clamorously threatened the vengeance of the Emperor upon the author. But he lay concealed, and possibly might be in the number of those who expressed their indignation.

What must one suppose of such a man's private conduct, who upon so important an affair, and at so solemn a time, could indulge in ribald drollery; who, finally durst play the prater, witling, and exquisite, in the very Senate? "Nobody will know," is the argument that emboldens depraved minds to commit these indecencies. This person called for the tablets, took up the pen, and bent his head to write, undeterred by fear of others or by self-respect. Hence arise these buffooneries, fit only for the boards of a theatre. Whither is one to turn, what remedies may one search out? Our disorders everywhere prove irremediable; but "all this will be the care of

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

multum cotidie vigiliarum, multum laboris adicit haec nostra iners sed tamen effrenata petulantia. Vale.

### XXVI

C. PLINIUS METILIO NEPOTI SUO S.

PETIS, ut libellos meos, quos studiosissime comparasti, legendos recognoscendosque curem. Faciam. Quid enim suscipere libentius debeo, te praesertim exigente? Nam, cum vir gravissimus, doctissimus, disertissimus, super haec occupatissimus, maximae provinciae praefuturus tanti putes scripta nostra circumferre tecum, quanto opere mihi providendum est, ne te haec pars sarcinarum tamquam supervacua offendat? Adnitar ergo, primum ut comites istos quam commodissimos habeas, deinde ut reversus invenias, quos istis addere velis. Neque enim mediocriter me ad nova opera tu lector hortaris. Vale.

### XXVII

C. PLINIUS POMPEIO FALCONI SUO S.

TERTIUS dies est, quod audiavi recitantem Serium<sup>1</sup> Augurinum cum summa mea voluptate, immo etiam admiratione. Poëmatia appellat. Multa tenuiter, multa sublimiter, multa venuste, multa tenere, multa

<sup>1</sup> Serium *Mommsen, Müller, Sentium vulg.*

## BOOK IV. xxv.-xxvii

that superior Power," who by our futile, but unbridled effrontery, has daily fresh occasion of exerting all his pains and vigilance. Farewell.

### XXVI

#### TO METILIUS NEPOS

YOU request me to supervise the revision of my works, which you have most diligently collected. I shall do so ; for what task ought I to undertake more willingly, especially at your instance ? When a man of consummate dignity, learning and eloquence (who is, moreover, deep in affairs and governor designate of an important province), thinks it worth while to carry my writings about with him, must I not earnestly see to it that this part of his baggage may not prove a superfluous incumbrance ? My first care therefore shall be, that these companions of yours may be as agreeable as possible ; and my next, that you may find others on your return, whom you will gladly add to your present *suite*. For to have such a reader as you are is no small inducement to attempt fresh compositions. Farewell.

### XXVII

#### TO POMPEIUS FALCO

I HAVE been attending these three days the recital of Augurinus's poems, which I heard not only with great pleasure, but even admiration. He calls them "Poems in Little." They are conceived with much delicacy and elegance, and abound with numberless

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

dulciter, multa cum bile. Aliquot annis puto nihil generis eiusdem absolutius scriptum, nisi forte me fallit aut amor eius, aut quod me ipsum laudibus vexit. Nam lemma sibi sumpsit, quod ego interdum versibus ludo. Atque adeo iudicii mei te iudicem faciam, si mihi ex hoc ipso lemmate secundus versus occurrerit; nam ceteros teneo, et iam explicui.

Canto carmina versibus minutis,  
his olim quibus et meus Catullus  
et Calvus veteresque. Sed quid ad me?  
unus Plinius est mihi priores;  
mavult versiculos foro relicto  
et quaerit, quod amet, putatque amari.  
Ille o Plinius, ille quot Catones!  
I nunc, qui sapias,<sup>1</sup> amare noli.

Vides, quam acuta omnia, quam apta, quam expressa. Ad hunc gustum totum librum repromitto, quem tibi, ut primum publicaverit, exhibebo. Interim ama iuvenem et temporibus nostris gratulare pro ingenio tali, quod ille moribus adornat. Vivit cum

<sup>1</sup> qui sapias *a*, Müller, quisquis sapias *Fpr*, quisquis amas *MD, K, Bipons*.

<sup>a</sup> *lemma* (Gr. λήμμα) "theme"; but in the next sentence used of the epigram itself.

strokes of tenderness and sublimity, of wit and satire. I am of opinion, there has not any thing for these many years appeared more finished of the kind; if indeed my great affection for him and the praises he bestows upon me, do not bias my judgement. For he has made it the subject of an epigram<sup>a</sup> that I sometimes amuse myself with writing verses. If I can recollect the second line of this epigram (for the rest I remember and have already got correctly) you shall judge if my sentiments are just :

“Sweetly flow my tender lays,  
Like Calvus’ or Catullus’ strains,  
(Bards approv’d of ancient days !)  
Where Love in all its softness reigns.

“But wherefore *ancient* poets name?  
Let Pliny my example be :  
Him the sacred Nine inflame ;  
Yet strict as any Cato he !

“To mutual love he tunes the lay,  
While from the noisy bar he flies:  
Say then ye grave, ye formal say,  
Who shall gentle Love despise?”

You see with what sprightliness of imagination, what propriety of sentiment, what clearness of expression the whole is wrought up ; and in this taste I will venture to assure you, you will find his performance in general, which I will send you as soon as it shall be published. In the meanwhile, admit this excellent youth into a share of your affection, and congratulate our age on the production of such a genius, whose virtues render him still more illustrious. He spends his time partly with Spurinna, and partly

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Spurinna, vivit cum Antonino, quorum alteri adfinis, utrique contubernalis est. Possis ex hoc facere coniecturam, quam sit emendatus adulescens, qui a gravissimis senibus sic amatur. Est enim illud verissimum :

γινώσκων, ὅτι  
τοιούτός ἐστιν, οἷσπερ ᾗδεται συνών.<sup>1</sup>

Vale.

### XXVIII

C. PLINIUS VIBIO SEVERO SUO S.

HERENNIUS SEVERUS, vir doctissimus, magni aestimat in bibliotheca sua ponere imagines municipum tuorum, Cornelii Nepotis et Titi Cati, petitque, si sunt istic, ut esse credibile est, exscribendas pingendasque delegem. Quam curam tibi potissimum iniungo, primum quia desideriiis meis amicissime obsequeris, deinde quia tibi studiorum summa reverentia, summus amor studiosorum, postremo quod patriam tuam omnesque, qui nomen eius auxerunt, ut patriam ipsam veneraris et diligis. Peto autem, ut pictorem quam diligentissimum adsumas. Nam cum est arduum similitudinem effingere ex vero, tum longe difficillima est imitationis imitatio; a qua rogo ut artificem, quem elegeris, ne in melius quidem sinas aberrare. Vale.

<sup>1</sup> *Eurip. fragm.* (Nauck *F. T. G.* p. 490).

## BOOK IV. xxvii.—xxviii

with Antoninus; he has the honour to be related to one, and to be the companion of both. You will easily imagine what uncommon virtues *he* must possess, who is thus the favourite of two such venerable old men: for the poet's observation is most undoubtedly true:

“Those who in close society are join'd  
In *manners* equal, you will ever find.”

Farewell.

### XXVIII

#### TO VIBIUS SEVERUS

HERENNIUS SEVERUS, a person of distinguished learning, is greatly desirous to have the pictures of two of your fellow townsmen, Cornelius Nepos, and Titus Catus, to adorn his library; and has entreated me, if they are to be met with where you are (as probably they may) that I would procure copies of them for him. That care I recommend to you, rather than to any other, not only because I know your friendship for me readily inclines you to comply with my requests; but as being sensible of the high regard you have for learning and all her friends; and that your affection and veneration for those who have been an ornament to your country, is equal to that which you bear towards your country herself. I beg, moreover, you would employ some skilful hand in this work; for if it is difficult to draw an exact likeness from the life, it is much more so to preserve it in copying what is itself a copy; so I desire you would not suffer the painter you select to deviate from the latter, not even for the better.

Farewell.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

### XXIX

C. PLINIUS ROMATIO FIRMO SUO S.

HEIA tu ! cum proxime res agentur, quoquo modo ad iudicandum veni. Nihil est, quod in dextram aurem fiducia mei dormias. Non impune cessatur. Ecce Licinius Nepos praetor, acer et fortis vir, multam dixit etiam senatori. Egit ille in senatu causam suam, egit autem sic, ut deprecaretur. Remissa est multa; sed timuit, sed rogavit, sed opus venia fuit. Dices : ‘ Non omnes praetores tam severi.’ Falleris. Nam vel instituere vel reducere eiusmodi exemplum non nisi severi, institutum reductumve exercere etiam lenissimi possunt. Vale.

### XXX

C. PLINIUS LICINIO SURAE SUO S.

ATTULI tibi ex patria mea pro munusculo quaestionem altissima ista eruditione dignissimam. Fons oritur in monte, per saxa decurrit, excipitur cenatiuncula manu facta; ibi paulum retentus in Larium lacum decedit. Huius mira natura; ter in die statis

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<sup>a</sup> *in dextram aurem dormire*, “to sleep soundly,” proverbial for lazy unconcern.



## BOOK IV. xxix.—xxx

### XXIX

#### TO ROMATIUS FIRMUS

HARK ye, my friend, you must at all rates take your place upon the bench the next time the court sits. In vain would your indolence repose itself<sup>a</sup> under my protection; for if you shirk, you will rue it. Behold that severe Praetor, the bold Licinius Nepos, fining even a senator for the same neglect. The senator pleaded his cause in person; but pleaded in suppliant tone. The fine, it is true, was remitted; but sore was his dismay, but humble his entreaty, but urgent his need of indulgence. All magistrates in that office, you will tell me, are not thus formidably rigid. You may be mistaken; for though only men of such a character would set or revive a precedent of this kind; yet when once it is introduced or restored, even lenity herself may follow it. Farewell.

### XXX

#### TO LICINIUS SURA

I HAVE brought you as a fairing from my home-country, a problem worthy of your profound erudition. There is a spring which rises in the mountain, and running among the rocks is received into a little banqueting-room, from whence, after being detained a short time, it falls into the Larian lake. The nature of this spring is extremely surprising; it ebbs

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

auctibus ac diminutionibus crescit decrescitque. Cernitur id palam et cum summa voluptate deprehenditur. Iuxta recumbis et vesceris atque etiam ex ipso fonte (nam est frigidissimus) potas, interim ille certis dimensisque momentis vel subtrahitur vel adsurgit. Annulum seu quid aliud ponis in sicco, adluitur sensim ac novissime operitur, detegitur rursus paulatimque deseritur. Si diutius observes, utrumque iterum ac tertio videas.

Spiritusne aliquis occultior os fontis et fauces modo laxat, modo includit, prout illatus occurrit aut decessit expulsus? quod in ampullis ceterisque generis eiusdem videmus accidere, quibus non hians nec statim patens exitus. Nam illa quoque, quamquam prona atque vergentia, per quasdam obluctantis animae moras crebris quasi singultibus sistunt, quod effundunt. An, quae Oceano natura, fonti quoque, quaque ille ratione aut impellitur aut resorbetur, hac modicus hic humor vicibus alternis supprimitur vel erigitur? An, ut flumina, quae in mare deferuntur, adversantibus ventis obvioque aestu retorquentur, ita est aliquid, quod huius fontis excursum repercutiat? An latentibus venis certa mensura, quae dum colligit, quod exhauserat, minor rivus et pigrior, cum collegit, agilior maiorque profertur? An nescio quod libra-

and flows by regular amounts three times a day. This increase and decrease can be plainly observed, and under very delightful conditions. You recline by the side of the fountain, and whilst you are taking a repast and drinking its water too, for it is extremely cool, you see it rise and fall by fixed and measured gradations. If you place a ring, or anything else, on the dry margin, the stream reaches it by degrees till it is entirely covered, and then again gently retires from it; and this you may see it do, if you prolong your watch, for three times successively.

Shall we say, that some secret current of air stops and opens the outlet of the spring, as it is borne into, or expelled from it; as we see in bottles, and other such vessels, where there is not a free and open outlet, though you turn and tilt them downwards, yet the outward air obstructing the vent, they discharge their contents as it were by a succession of gurgling sobs? Or may not this spring have the same property as the ocean, so that the same principle which governs the flux and reflux of the latter, may account for the alternate suppression and effusion of this small body of water? Or, as rivers, which discharge themselves into the sea, meeting with contrary winds and the landward swell of the ocean, are forced back in their channels; so may there not be something that checks this fountain, for a time in its progress? Or is there rather a certain reservoir that contains these waters in the bowels of the earth, which while it is recruiting its discharges, the stream flows more slowly and in less quantity, but when it has collected its due measure, it runs again in its usual strength and fullness? Or

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

mentum abditum et caecum, quod cum exinanitum est, suscitatur et elicit fontem, cum repletum, moratur et strangulat?

Scrutare tu causas (potes enim) quae tantum miraculum efficiunt; mihi abunde est, si satis expressi, quod efficitur. Vale.

31 V 16

## BOOK IV. xxx

lastly, is there I know not what kind of subterraneous poise, that when dry allows the spring to rise, but when full obstructs and chokes it?

You, who are so well qualified for the inquiry, will examine the reasons of this wonderful appearance; it will be sufficient for *me* if I have given you a clear description of it. Farewell.



## BOOK V

## LIBER QUINTUS

### I

C. PLINIUS ANNIO SEVERO SUO S.

LEGATUM mihi obvenit modicum, sed amplissimo gratius. Cur amplissimo gratius? Pomponia Galla exheredato filio Asudio Curiano heredem reliquerat me, dederat coheredes Sertorium Severum, praetorium virum, aliosque equites Romanos splendidos. Curianus filius orabat, ut sibi donarem portionem meam seque praeiudicio iuvarem, eandem tacita conventionem salvam mihi pollicebatur. Respondebam non convenire moribus meis aliud palam, aliud agere secreto, praeterea non esse satis honestum donare et locupleti et orbo, in summa non profuturum ei, si donassem, profuturum, si cessissem, esse autem me paratum cedere, si inique exheredatum mihi liqueret.

Ad hoc ille: ‘Rogo, cognoscas.’ Cunctatus paulum ‘Faciam’ inquam: ‘neque enim video, cur

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<sup>a</sup> i.e. it would have the appearance of bribing him to make a will in Pliny's favour.



## BOOK V

### I

#### TO ANNIUS SEVERUS

A SMALL legacy which was lately left me, has given me greater pleasure than I could have received by a very large one. How so, you ask? Pomponia Galla, having disinherited her son Asudius Curianus, made me her heir, and appointed Sertorius Severus, a man of Praetorian rank, together with several eminent Roman knights, as coheirs. The son begged me to make him a gift of my share, in order to afford him a precedent for recovery from the rest of the heirs; offering at the same time to enter into a secret agreement to return it. I told him, it was by no means agreeable to my character to carry the appearance of acting one thing, whilst I was, in truth, acting another; and that there was something dishonourable in making a gift to a man both rich and childless<sup>a</sup>; and, in fine, that such a gift would not at all answer the purpose at which he was aiming. But (I added) if I were to renounce my legacy, *that* would advantage his claim: and this I was ready and willing to do, if he could prove to me that he was unjustly disinherited.

"Let me beg you," said he, "to investigate my case yourself." After a short pause, "I will do so,"

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

ipse me minorem putem, quam tibi videor. Sed iam nunc memento non defuturam mihi constantiam, si ita fides duxerit, secundum matrem tuam pronuntiandi.' 'Ut voles' ait: 'voles enim, quod aequissimum.'

Adhibui in consilium duos, quos tunc civitas nostra spectatissimos habuit, Corellium et Frontinum. His circumdatus in cubiculo meo sedi. Dixit Curianus, quae pro se putabat. Respondi paucis ego; neque enim aderat alius, qui defunctae pudorem tueretur; deinde secessi et ex consilii sententia, 'Videtur' inquam, 'Curiane, mater tua iustas habuisse causas irascendi tibi.'

Post hoc ille cum ceteris subscripsit centumvirale iudicium, mecum non subscripsit. Adpetebat iudicii dies. Coheredes mei componere et transigere cupiebant non diffidentia causae, sed metu temporum. Verebantur, quod videbant multis accidisse, ne ex centumvirali iudicio capitis rei exirent. Et erant quidam in illis, quibus obici et Gratillae amicitia et Rustici posset. Rogant me, ut cum Curiano loquar. Convenimus in aedem Concordiae. Ibi ego 'Si mater' inquam 'te ex parte quarta scripsisset heredem, num queri posses? Quid si heredem quidem instituisset ex asse, sed legatis ita exhausisset, ut non amplius apud te quam quarta remaneret?

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" Gratilla was the wife of Rusticus: Rusticus was put to death by Domitian, and Gratilla banished.

## BOOK V. i

I said, "for I do not see why I should rate myself lower than you seem to do. But take notice beforehand, I shall not want resolution to uphold your mother's testamentary dispositions, if I honestly think they are just." "Have your own way," said he; "for that is sure to be the fairest."

I called in as advisers Corellius and Frontinus, two of the most eminent citizens which Rome at that time possessed. Attended with those friends, I heard the cause in my chamber. Curianus stated his pretensions, to whom (as there was nobody but myself present to defend the character of the defunct lady) I made a short reply; then, after private consultation with my advisers, "Curianus," said I, "we are of opinion that your mother had just cause to be offended with you."

Sometime afterward, Curianus commenced a suit in the Centumviral court against all the coheirs except myself. The day of trial approaching, the rest of the coheirs were desirous of compromising the affair; not out of any diffidence of their cause, but from a distrust of the times. They were apprehensive, what had been the case of many others might happen to them, and that from a civil suit it should end in a capital one. And there were some amongst them whose friendship with both Gratilla<sup>a</sup> and Rusticus might be brought up to their prejudice at the trial. They therefore desired me to go and talk with Curianus. We met in the Temple of Concord; "Suppose," said I, "your mother had left you the fourth part of her estate, or even suppose she had made you sole heir, but had exhausted so much of the estate in minor bequests that there would not be more than a fourth part remaining to

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Igitur sufficere tibi debet, si exheredatus a matre quartam partem ab heredibus eius accipias, quam tamen ego augebo. Scis te non subscripsisse mecum, et iam biennium transisse, omniaque me usu cepisse. Sed ut te coheredes mei tractabiliorem experiantur, utque tibi nihil abstulerit reverentia mei, offero pro mea parte tantundem.'

Tuli fructum non conscientiae modo, verum etiam famae. Ille ergo Curianus legatum mihi reliquit et factum meum, nisi forte blandior mihi, antiquum notabili honore signavit.

Haec tibi scripsi, quia de omnibus, quae ~~me~~ vel delectant vel angunt, non aliter tecum quam mecum loqui soleo, deinde quod durum existimabam te amantissimum mei fraudare voluptate, quam ipse capiebam. Neque enim sum tam sapiens, ut nihil mea intersit, an iis, quae honeste fecisse me credo, testificatio quaedam et quasi praemium accedat. Vale.

## II

C. PLINIUS CALPURNIO FLACCO SUO S.

ACCEPI pulcherrimos turdos, cum quibus parem calculum ponere nec urbis copiis ex Laurentino nec maris tam turbidis tempestatibus possum. Recipies

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<sup>a</sup> These birds were in high reputation among the Romans, and generally had a place upon elegant tables.

you ; could you justly have complained ? You ought to be contented therefore, if being absolutely disinherited, as you are, the heirs are willing to relinquish to you a fourth part ; which amount however I will increase. You know you did not sue *me*, and the prescription established by two years' undisputed possession secures me in my legacy. But to induce you to make terms with the coheirs, and that you may be no loser by the respect you shewed to me, I offer to contribute my proportion with them."

The satisfaction of my own conscience is not my only reward from this transaction ; it has enhanced my reputation. Now, it is this very Curianus who has left me a legacy ; thereby paying a signal tribute to my conduct, which was (if I do not flatter myself), true to the old Roman ideal.

I have given you this account, because I commune with you upon all my joys and sorrows as freely as with myself ; and because I thought it would be unkind to defraud so tender a friend of the pleasure I was myself experiencing. Pleasure, I own, was my feeling : for I do not pretend to such refined strains of philosophy as to be indifferent, when I think I have behaved like a man of honour, whether my action is, as it were, rewarded by a sort of testimonial. Farewell.

## II

## TO CALPURNIUS FLACCUS

I HAVE received your very fine thrushes<sup>a</sup> ; but I cannot match your gift with any dainty from town, as I am at my Laurentinum, nor from the sea, in the stormy weather now prevailing. I can only therefore

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

ergo epistulas steriles et simpliciter ingratas ac ne illam quidem sollertiam Diomedis in permutando munere imitantes. Sed, quae facilitas tua, hoc magis dabis veniam, quod se non mereri fatentur. Vale.

### III

C. PLINIUS TITIO ARISTONI SUO S.

CUM plurima officia tua mihi grata et iucunda sunt, tum vel maxime, quod me celandum non putasti fuisse apud te de versiculis meis multum copiosumque sermonem, eumque diversitate iudiciorum longius processisse, exstitisse etiam quosdam, qui scripta quidem ipsa non improbarent, me tamen amice simpliciterque reprehenderent, quod haec scriberem recitaremque. Quibus ego, ut augeam meam culpam, ita respondeo : facio non numquam versiculos severos parum, facio et<sup>1</sup> comoedias audio et specto mimos et lyricos lego et Sotadicos intellego ; aliquando praeterea rideo, iocor, ludo, utque omnia innoxiae remissionis genera breviter amplectar, 'Homo sum.'

<sup>1</sup> facio et *Dpr*, *K*, *Müll.*, fac. nam et *M F Ricc.* (*corr.*) *a*, fac. etiam *Ricc.* ante *corr.*

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\* Alluding to the story in Homer, where Glaucus and Diomed having an interview between the two armies, they come to the knowledge of the friendship and hospitality which had formerly subsisted between their families, and Diomed proposes an exchange of their arms, as a token of reciprocal friendship :

“ Brave Glaucus then each narrow thought resign’d  
(Jove warm’d his bosom and enlarg’d his mind) ;  
For Diomed’s brass arms of mean device,  
For which nine oxen paid (a vulgar price)

## BOOK V. ii.-iii

make you the churlish and barren acknowledgement of a letter ; an exchange more unequal, I confess, than that famous one of the subtle Diomed.<sup>a</sup> But your good-nature will so much the more readily grant me an excuse, as I own myself not to deserve one. Farewell.

### III

#### TO TITIVS ARISTO

AMONGST the many agreeable and obliging instances I have received of your friendship, your not thinking proper to conceal from me the long conversation which lately passed at your house concerning my verses, and the various judgements pronounced upon them, is by no means the least. There were some, you tell me, who did not disapprove the character of my poems, but at the same time censured me in a candid and friendly manner, for composing and reciting such works. My reply to these critics is of a nature to aggravate my offence ; I confess that I sometimes write verses of no very strait-laced kind ; I furthermore listen to comedies, witness broad farces, read love-poetry,<sup>b</sup> and enter into the spirit of the most wanton Muse. Besides all this, I not seldom indulge in mirth, wit and gaiety ; and to sum up every kind of innocent amusement in one word, *I am a man*.<sup>c</sup>

He gave his own of gold divinely wrought ;  
An hundred beeves the shining purchase bought.

POPE, *Il.* vi. 325 (Melmoth).

<sup>b</sup> *Lyric* had become synonymous with *erotic* verse. *Sotadic* verse was a form invented by the obscene Greek poet Sotades.

<sup>c</sup> *Homo sum ; humani nihil a me alienum puto.* TERENCE, *Heaut.* 77.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Nec vero moleste fero hanc esse de moribus meis existimationem, ut, qui nesciunt talia doctissimos, gravissimos, sanctissimos homines scriptitasse, me scribere mirentur. Ab illis autem, quibus notum est, quos quantosque auctores sequar, facile impetrari posse confido, ut errare me, sed cum illis sinant, quorum non seria modo, verum etiam lusus exprimere laudabile est. An ego verear (neminem viventium, ne quam in speciem adulationis incidam, nominabo)—sed ego verear, ne me non satis deceat, quod decuit M. Tullium, C. Calvum, Asinium Pollionem, M. Messalam, Q. Hortensium, M. Brutum, L. Sullam, Q. Catulum, Q. Scaevolam, Servium Sulpicium, Varronem, Torquatum, immo Torquatos, C. Memmum, Lentulum Gaetulicum, Annaeum Senecam et proxime Verginium Rufum et, si non sufficiunt exempla privata, divum Iulium, divum Augustum, divum Nervam, Tiberium Caesarem? Neronem enim trans eo, quamvis sciam non corrumpi in deterius, quae aliquando etiam a malis, sed honesta manere, quae saepius a bonis fiunt. Inter quos vel praecipue numerandus est P. Vergilius, Cornelius Nepos et prius Ennius Acciusque. Non quidem hi senatores, sed sanctitas morum non distat ordinibus.

Recito tamen, quod illi an fecerint, nescio. Etiam; sed illi iudicio suo poterant esse contenti, mihi modestior conscientia<sup>1</sup> est, quam ut satis absolutum putem, quod a me probetur. Itaque has recitandi causas sequor, primum quod ipse, qui recitat, ali-

<sup>1</sup> conscntia, *Casaubon*, *Bip. K*, constantia *MSS.*, *Müll.*



But I am not at all displeased to find my character held so high that those who are ignorant that the most learned, the gravest and the most moral of men have enjoyed themselves in compositions of this order, should be surprised at *my* doing so ; but those who know what noble examples I follow, will readily allow me, I trust, to err—while I err in their company whom it is an honour to imitate, not only in their most serious actions, but lightest amusements. Am I to fear (I will not name any living example, lest I should seem to flatter)—I say, am I to fear a practice may ill become *me*, which was not beneath the dignity of Tully, Calvus, Pollio, Messala, Hortensius, Brutus, Sulla, Catulus, Scaevola, Sulpicius, Varro, the Torquati, Memmius, Gaetulicus, Seneca, and, in our own day, Virginius Rufus? And, if the example of subjects is not enough, I can add that of Julius Caesar, Augustus, Nerva and Tiberius. I forbear to add Nero to the catalogue ; though I am sensible, what is the occasional employment of the vicious does not therefore degenerate into wrong ; on the contrary, it still maintains its credit, if frequently practised by the virtuous. In that number Virgil, Cornelius Nepos, and prior to these, Ennius and Accius, justly deserve the most distinguished place. These last indeed were not senators, but virtue knows no distinction of rank or title.

I *recite* my works, however, which I rather think my exemplars did not. Granted ; but those great men might well be satisfied with their own judgement ; I am not conscious of such talents that I can suppose my compositions sufficiently perfect, when they meet my own approval. My reasons then for reciting are these ; firstly the reciter himself becomes

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quanto acrius scriptis suis auditorum reverentia intendit, deinde quod, de quibus dubitat, quasi ex consilii sententia statuit. Multa etiam a multis admonetur et, si non admoneatur, quid quisque sentiat, perspicit ex vultu, oculis, nutu, manu, murmure, silentio; quae satis apertis notis iudicium ab humanitate discernunt. Atque adeo, si cui forte eorum, qui interfuerunt, curae fuerit eadem illa legere, intellet me quaedam aut commutasse aut praeterisse, fortasse etiam ex suo iudicio, quamvis ipse nihil dixerit mihi. Atque haec ita disputo, quasi populum in auditorium, non in cubiculum amicos advocarim, quos plures habere multis gloriosum, reprehensioni nemini fuit. Vale.

### IV

C. PLINIUS IULIO VALERIANO SUO S.

RES parva, sed initium non parvae. Vir praetorius Sollers a senatu petiit, ut sibi instituere in agris suis nundinas permetteretur; contra dixerunt Vicetinorum legati; adfuit Tuscilius Nominatus; dilata causa est. Alio senatu Vicetini sine avvocato intraverunt, dixit

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## BOOK V. iii.-iv

a keener critic of his work, under the diffidence inspired by an audience ; secondly, he can settle any points on which he feels doubtful by the advice of assessors, so to speak. He has, moreover, the advantage of receiving many hints from different persons ; and, failing this, he can discover his hearers' sentiments from the air of a countenance, the turn of a head or eye, the motion of a hand, a murmur of applause, or even silence itself ; signs which will plainly enough distinguish their real judgement from the language of civility. And, indeed, if anyone of my audience should have the curiosity to peruse the same performance which he heard me read, he may find several things altered or omitted, and perhaps too upon *his* judgement, though he did not say a single word to me. But I am arguing as if I had invited the general public to an audience-hall, instead of friends to my own house. True, they made a large audience ; but to have numerous friends has been a boast to many, a reproach to none. Farewell.

### IV

#### TO IULIUS VALERIANUS

A TRIVIAL affair, but fraught with no trivial consequences, has taken place. Sollers, an ex-Praetor, petitioned the Senate's leave to hold a fair upon his estate. This was opposed by deputies from the Vicentini, who employed Tuscilius Nominatus as their counsel. The cause was adjourned ; and at the next session the deputies appeared unattended by their counsel, and declared that they had been cheated : an expression, which, whether it

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runt se deceptos lapsine verbo, an quia ita sentiebant? Interrogati a Nepote praetore, quem docuissent, responderunt, quem prius. Interrogati, an tunc gratis adfuisset, responderunt, sex milibus nummum; an rursus aliquid dedissent, dixerunt mille denarios. Nepos postulavit, ut Nominatus induceretur. Hac-tenus illo die. Sed, quantum auguror, longius res procedet. Nam pleraque tacta tantum et omnino commota latissime serpunt. Erexī aures tuas. Quam diu nunc oportet, quam blande roges, ut reliqua cognoscas! si tamen non ante ob haec ipsa veneris Romam spectatorque malueris esse quam lector. Vale.

### V

C. PLINIUS NONIO MAXIMO SUO S.

NUNTIATUM mihi est<sup>1</sup> C. Fannium decessisse; qui nuntius gravi me dolore confudit, primum quod amavi hominem elegantem, disertum, deinde quod iudicio eius uti solebam. Erat enim natura acutus, usu exercitatus, varietate promptissimus. Angit me super ista casus ipsius. Decessit veteri testamento, omisit, quos maxime diligebat, prosecutus est, quibus offensior erat.

Sed hoc utcunque tolerabile, gravius illud, quod

<sup>1</sup> nuntiatum m. est *M*, *Bipons*, *K*, nuntiatum mihi, *Ricc. Fpra*, *Müller*.

## BOOK V. iv.-v

dropped from them in the warmth of resentment, or that they really thought so, I will not determine. Nepos the Praetor asked them who it was they had briefed. They replied, the same counsel as before. Asked whether he then appeared for them without a fee, they said they had paid him six thousand sesterces. Had they paid him a second fee? Yes, one thousand denarii. Upon which, Nepos moved that Nominatus should be ordered to attend. The affair went no further that day; but, if I argue truly, it will not end here; for one may observe in several instances, the slightest sparks have lighted up a train of very remote consequences. And now I have raised your curiosity, I shall require much coaxing to make me tell you the sequel;<sup>a</sup> always supposing you do not forestall me by coming expressly to Rome, and choosing to witness, rather than read it. Farewell.

### V

#### TO NONIUS MAXIMUS

I AM deeply afflicted by tidings of the death of Fannius,<sup>b</sup> since I not only loved that polished and eloquent man, but constantly relied upon his judgement; for his penetrating genius was improved by experience, and varied in resource. It aggravates my concern that he had the misfortune to die leaving an old will unrevoked; the result is, he has passed over those dearest to him, and favoured persons who bore him some animosity.

But this can be borne, after a fashion; a more

<sup>a</sup> See v. 13.

<sup>b</sup> Otherwise unknown.

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pulcherrimum opus imperfectum reliquit. Quamvis enim agendis causis distringeretur, scribebat tamen exitus occisorum aut relegatorum a Nerone et iam tres libros absolverat subtiles et diligentes et Latinos atque inter sermonem historiamque medios ac tanto magis reliquos perficere cupiebat, quanto frequentius hi lectitabantur.

Mihi autem videtur acerba semper et immatura mors eorum, qui immortale aliquid parant. Nam, qui voluptatibus dediti quasi in diem vivunt, vivendi causas cotidie finiunt; qui vero posteros cogitant et memoriam sui operibus extendunt, his nulla mors non repentina est, ut quae semper inchoatum aliquid abrumpat. Gaius quidem Fannius, quod accidit, multo ante praesensit. Visus est sibi per nocturnam quietem iacere in lectulo suo compositus in habitu studentis, habere ante se scrinium (ita solebat); mox imaginatus est venisse Neronem, in toro resedissee, prompsisse primum librum, quem de sceleribus eius ediderat, eumque ad extremum revolvisse, idem in secundo ac tertio fecisse, tunc abiisse. Expavit et sic interpretatus est, tamquam idem sibi futurus esset scribendi finis, qui fuisset illi legendi, et fuit idem.

Quod me recordantem miseratio subit, quantum vigiliarum, quantum laboris exhausit frustra. Occursant animo mea mortalia, mea scripta. Nec dubito te quoque eadem cogitatione terreri pro istis, quae

grievous circumstance is that he has left a masterpiece of literature unfinished. Notwithstanding his harassing engagements at the bar, he was writing a history of the last scenes in the life of those who suffered death or banishment under Nero, and had already completed three books. These are written with great delicacy and exactness in the purest Latin, and in a style intermediate between the colloquial and the historical ; and as they found many readers, he was the more anxious to finish the rest.

For my part, I regard every death as cruel and premature, that removes one who is preparing some immortal work. The sons of sensuality, who have no views beyond the present hour, terminate with each day the whole purpose of their lives ; but those who look forward to posterity, and prolong their memories by their works : to such, death is always sudden, as it always breaks off some unfinished design. Fannius long beforehand had a strong presentiment of what has happened. He thought that he was reclining at midnight on his couch, all in the quiet midnight hour, equipped for study, his bookcase before him as usual ; presently, so he fancied, Nero came in and seating himself on the couch, took up the first book of Fannius' history of his crimes, and read it through ; he did the same with the second and third books, and then went away. Fannius was terror-struck ; he took the vision as signifying that he would write no more of his history than Nero had read ; and so it came to pass.

Recalling this accident, I am moved to pity for his fruitless expense of so much toil, so many vigils. It occurs to me that I too am mortal, I too have written ; and I doubt not the same reflection alarms you for

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

inter manus habes. Proinde, dum suppetit vita, enitatur, ut mors quam paucissima, quae abolere possit, inveniatur. Vale.

### VI

C. PLINIUS DOMITIO APOLLINARI SUO S.

AMAVI curam et sollicitudinem tuam, quod, cum audisses me aestate Tuscos meos petiturum, ne facerem, suasisti, dum putas insalubres. Est sane gravis et pestilens ora Tuscorum, quae per litus extenditur; sed hi procul a mari recesserunt, quin etiam Appennino, saluberrimo montium, subiacent. Atque adeo ut omnem pro me metum ponas, accipe temperiem caeli, regionis situm, villae amoenitatem; quae et tibi auditu et mihi relatu iucunda erunt.

Caelum est hieme frigidum et gelidum; myrtos, oleas, quaeque alia adsiduo<sup>1</sup> tepore laetantur, aspernatur ac respuit; laurum tamen patitur atque etiam nitidissimam profert, interdum, sed non saepius quam sub urbe nostra necat. Aestatis mira clementia; semper aër spiritu aliquo movetur, frequentius tamen auras quam ventos habet. Hinc

<sup>1</sup> adsiduo *MD, Bipons, K, aestivo Ricc. Fpra Catan., Müller.*



## BOOK V. v.-vi

the works you have in hand. Let us strive then, while Life is ours, to secure that Death may find we have left little or nothing he can destroy. Farewell.

### VI

#### TO DOMITIUS APOLLINARIS

THE kind concern you expressed when you heard of my design to pass the summer at my villa in Tuscany, and your obliging endeavours to dissuade me from going to a place which you think unhealthy, is extremely agreeable to me. I confess, indeed, the air of that part of Tuscany, which lies towards the coast, is thick and unwholesome: but my house is situated at a great distance from the sea, and at the foot of the Apennine range, so much esteemed for salubrity. But that you may lay aside all apprehensions on my account, I will give you a description of the mildness of the climate, the situation of the country, and the beauty of my villa, which I am persuaded you will hear with as much pleasure as I shall relate.

The winters are severe and cold, so that myrtles, olives, and other trees which delight in constant warmth, will not flourish here; but bay trees can grow, and even in great perfection; yet sometimes, though indeed not oftener than in the neighbourhood of Rome, they are killed by the sharpness of the seasons. The summers are exceedingly temperate; currents of air are continually stirring, though breezes are more frequent than high winds. Hence

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senes multi; videas avos proavosque iam iuvenum, audias fabulas veteres sermonesque maiorum, cumque veneris illo, putes alio te saeculo natum.

Regionis forma pulcherrima. Imaginare amphitheatrum aliquod immensum, et quale sola rerum natura possit effingere. Lata et diffusa planities montibus cingitur, montes summa sui parte procera nemora et antiqua habent. Frequens ibi et varia venatio. Inde caeduae silvae cum ipso monte descendunt. Has inter pingues terrenique colles (neque enim facile usquam saxum, etiam si quaeratur, occurrit) planissimis campis fertilitate non cedunt opimamque messem serius tantum, sed non minus percoquunt. Sub his per latus omne vineae porriguntur unamque faciem longe lateque contexunt; quarum a fine imoque quasi margine arbusta nascuntur. Prata inde campique, campi, quos non nisi ingentes boves et fortissima aratra perfringunt; tantis glebis tenacissimum solum, cum primum prosecatur, adsurgit, ut nono demum sulco perdometur. Prata florida et gemmea trifolium aliasque herbas teneras semper et molles et quasi novas alunt. Cuncta enim perennibus rivis nutriuntur. Sed ubi aquae plurimum, palus nulla, quia devexa terra, quidquid liquoris accepit nec absorbit, ef-

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old men abound ; if you were to come here and see the numbers who have adult grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and hear the stories they can entertain you with of their ancestors, you would fancy yourself born in some former age.

The aspect of the country is the most beautiful possible ; figure to yourself an immense amphitheatre, such as the hand of nature could alone form. Before you lies a vast extended plain bounded by a range of mountains, whose summits are crowned with lofty and venerable woods, which supply abundance and variety of game ; from hence as the mountains decline, they are adorned with under-woods. Intermixed with these are little hills of so loamy and fat a soil, that it would be difficult to find a single stone upon them ; their fertility is nothing inferior to the lowest grounds ; and though their harvest indeed is something later, their heavy crops are as well matured. At the foot of these hills the eye is presented, wherever it turns, with one unbroken view of numberless vineyards, which are terminated below by a border, as it were, of shrubs. From thence extend meadows and fields. The soil of the latter is so extremely stiff, upon the first ploughing it rises in such vast clods, that it is necessary to go over it nine several times with the largest oxen and the strongest ploughs, before they can be thoroughly broken. The flower-enamelled meadows produce trefoil and other kinds of herbage as fine and tender as if it were but just sprung up, being everywhere refreshed by never-failing rills. But though the country abounds with great plenty of water, there are no marshes ; for as the ground is sloping, whatever water it receives without absorbing,

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fundit in Tiberim. Medios ille agros secat nāvium  
patiens omnesque fruges devehit in urbem hieme  
dumtaxat et vere, aestate summittitur immensique  
fluminis nomen arenti alveo deserit, autumno re-  
sumit.

Magnam capies voluptatem, si hunc regionis situm  
ex monte prospexeris. Neque enim terras tibi, sed  
formam aliquam ad eximiam pulchritudinem pictam  
videberis cernere; ea varietate, ea descriptione,  
quocunque inciderint oculi, reficientur. Villa in colle  
imo sita prospicit quasi ex summo; ita leniter et  
sensim clivo fallente consurgit, ut, cum ascendere  
non putes, sentias ascendisse. A tergo Appenninum,  
sed longius habet; accipit ab hoc auras quamlibet  
sereno et placido die, non tamen acres et immodicas,  
sed spatio ipso lassas et infractas.

Magna sui parte meridiem spectat aestivumque  
solem ab hora sexta, hibernum aliquanto maturius  
quasi invitat in porticum latam et pro modo longam.<sup>1</sup>  
Multa in hac membra, atrium etiam ex more veterum.  
Ante porticum xystus concisus in plurimas species  
distinctusque buxo; demissus inde pronusque pul-  
vinus, cui bestiarum effigies invicem adversas buxus

<sup>1</sup> pro modo longam *FDpra*, *Müller*, *prominulam M*,  
*Bipons*, *K*.

## BOOK V. vi

runs off into the Tiber. This river, which winds through the middle of the meadows, is navigable only in the winter and spring, when it transports the produce of the lands to Rome ; but its contracted channel is so extremely low in summer, that it resigns the name of a *great river* which, however, it resumes in autumn.

You would be most agreeably entertained by taking a view of the face of this country from the mountains : you would imagine that not a real, but some painted landscape lay before you, drawn with the most exquisite beauty and exactness ; such an harmonious and regular variety charms the eye which way soever it throws itself. My villa, though situated at the foot of the mountain, commands as wide a prospect as the summit affords ; you go up to it by so gentle and insensible a rise, that you find yourself upon an elevation without perceiving you ascended. Behind, but at a great distance, stand the Apennine mountains ; in the calmest days breezes reach us from thence, but so spent and weakened by the long tract of land they travel over, that they are entirely divested of all their strength and violence.

The exposure of the main part of the house is full south ; thus it seems to invite the sun, from midday in summer (but something earlier in winter), into a wide and proportionably long portico, containing many divisions, one of which is an atrium, built after the manner of the ancients. In front of the portico is a terrace divided into a great number of geometrical figures, and bounded with a box-hedge. The descent from the terrace is a sloping bank, adorned with a double row of box-trees cut in

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inscripsit ; acanthus in plano mollis et paene dixerim liquidus. Ambit hunc ambulatio pressis varieque tonsis viridibus inclusa ; ab his gestatio in modum circi, quae buxum multiformem humilesque et retentas manu arbusculas circumit. Omnia maceria muniuntur ; hanc gradata buxus operit et subtrahit. Pratum inde non minus natura quam superiora illa arte visendum ; campi deinde porro multaque alia prata et arbusta.

A capite porticus triclinium excurrit. Valvis xystum desinentem et protinus pratum multumque ruris videt, fenestris hac latus xysti, et quod prosilit villae, hac adiacentis hippodromi nemus comasque prospectat. Contra mediam fere porticum diaeta paulum recedit, cingit areolam, quae quattuor platanis inumbratur. Inter has marmoreo labro aqua exundat circumiectasque platanos et subiecta platanis leni aspergine fovet. Est in hac diaeta dormitorium cubiculum, quod diem, clamorem, sonum excludit, iunctaque ei cotidiana amicorumque cenatio<sup>1</sup> ;

<sup>1</sup> amicorumque cen. *Ricc. FDa, K*, amicorum cenatio quae *M*.

## BOOK V. vi

the shape of animals ; the level ground at the foot of the bank is covered with the soft, I had almost said, the liquid acanthus : this lawn is surrounded by a walk enclosed with dense evergreens, trimmed into a variety of forms. Beyond is an *allée* laid out in the form of a circus, which encircles a plantation of box-trees cut in numberless different figures, and of small shrubs, either low-growing or prevented by the shears from running up too high. The whole is fenced in with a wall masked by box-trees, which rise in graduated ranks to the top. Beyond the wall lies a meadow that owes as many beauties to nature, as all I have been describing *within* does to art ; at the end of which are several other meadows and fields interspersed with thickets.

At the extremity of the portico stands a grand dining-room, which through its folding-doors looks upon one end of the terrace ; while beyond there is a very extensive prospect over the meadows up into the country ; from the windows you survey on the one hand the side of the terrace and such parts of the house which project forward, on the other, with the woods enclosing the adjacent hippodrome. Opposite almost to the centre of the portico stands a *suite* of apartments something retired, which encompasses a small court, shaded by four plane-trees, in the midst of which a fountain rises, from whence the water running over the edges of a marble basin gently refreshes the surrounding plane-trees and the ground underneath them. This *suite* contains a bed-chamber free from every kind of noise, and which the light itself cannot penetrate ; together with my ordinary dining-room that I use too when I have none but familiar friends with me ;

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areolam illam, porticum [aliam]<sup>1</sup> eademque omnia quae porticus aspicit. Est et aliud cubiculum a proxima platano viride et umbrosum, marmore excultum podio tenus, nec cedit gratiae marmoris ramos insidentesque ramis aves imitata pictura. Fonticulus in hoc in fonte crater; circa sipunculi plures miscent iucundissimum murmur.

In cornu porticus amplissimum cubiculum a triclinio occurrit; aliis fenestris xystum, aliis despicit pratum, sed ante piscinam, quae fenestris servit ac subiacet, strepitu visuque iucundam; nam ex edito desiliens aqua suscepta marmore albescit. Idem cubiculum hieme tepidissimum, quia plurimo sole perfunditur. Cohæret hypocauston et, si dies nubilus, immisso vapore solis vicem supplet. Inde apodyterium balinei laxum et hilare excipit cella frigidaria, in qua baptisterium amplum atque opacum. Si natare latius aut tepidius velis, in area piscina est, in proximo puteus, ex quo possis rursus adstringi, si paeniteat teporis. Frigidariae cellae conecitur media, cui sol benignissime praesto est,

<sup>1</sup> [aliam] *incl. K*, porticus alia *Fpra.*



this looks upon the little court I just now described, also upon the portico and the whole prospect thence. There is, besides, another room, which, being situated close to the nearest plane-tree, enjoys a constant shade and verdure ; its sides are covered with marble up to the cornice : on the frieze above a foliage is painted, with birds perched among the branches, which has an effect altogether as agreeable as that of the marble. In this room is placed a little fountain, that, playing through several small pipes into a vase, produces a most pleasing murmur.

From a wing of the portico you enter into a very spacious chamber opposite to the grand dining-room, which from some of its windows has a view of the terrace, and from others of the meadow, while those in the front dominate an ornamental basin just beneath them, which entertains at once both the eye and the ear ; for the water falling from a great height, foams round its marble receptacle. This room is extremely warm in winter, being much exposed to the sun, and in a cloudy day the hot air from an adjoining stove very well supplies his absence. From hence you pass through a spacious and pleasant undressing-room into the cold-bath-room, in which is a large, gloomy bath : but if you are disposed to swim more at large, or in warmer water, there is a pool for that purpose in the court, and near it a reservoir from whence you may be supplied with cold water to brace yourself again, if you should perceive you are too much relaxed by the warm. Contiguous to the cold-bath is a tepid one, which enjoys the kindly warmth of the sun, but not so intensely as that of the hot-bath, which projects from the house. This last consists of three

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caldariae magis ; prominet enim. In hac tres descensiones, duae in sole, tertia a sole longius, a luce non longius.

Apodyterio superpositum est sphaeristerium, quod plura genera exercitationis pluresque circulos capit. Nec procul a balineo scalae, quae in cryptoporticum ferunt, prius ad diaetas tres. Harum alia areolae illi, in qua platani quattuor, alia prato, alia vineis imminet diversasque caeli partes ut prospectus habet. In summa cryptoporticu cubiculum ex ipsa cryptoporticu excisum, quod hippodromum, vineas, montes intuetur. Iungitur cubiculum obvium soli, maxime hiberno. Hinc oritur diaeta, quae villae hippodromum adnectit.

Haec facies, hic usus a fronte. A latere aestiva cryptoporticus in edito posita, quae non aspicere vineas, sed tangere videtur. In media triclinium saluberrimum adflatum ex Appenninis vallibus recipit ; post latissimis fenestris vineas, valvis aequae vineas, sed per cryptoporticum quasi admittit. A latere triclinii, quod fenestris caret, scalae convivio utilia secretiore ambitu suggerunt. In fine cubiculum, cui non minus iucundum prospectum cryptoporticus

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several divisions, each of different degrees of heat ; the two former lie open to the full sun, the latter, though not so much exposed to its heat, receives an equal share of its light.

Over the undressing-room is built the ball-court, which is large enough to admit of several different kinds of games being played at once, each with its own circle of spectators. Not far from the baths is a stair-case which leads to a gallery, and to three apartments on the way ; one of these looks upon the little court with the four plane-trees round it ; another has a sight of the meadows ; the third abuts upon the vineyard, and commands a prospect of opposite quarters of the heavens. At one end of the gallery, and indeed taken off from it, is a chamber that looks upon the hippodrome, the vineyard and the mountains ; adjoining is a room which has a full exposure to the sun, especially in winter : from hence runs an apartment that connects the hippodrome with the house.

Such are the villa's beauties and conveniences on the front. On the side is a summer gallery which stands high, and has not only a prospect of the vineyard, but seems almost to touch it. Midway it contains a dining-room cooled by the wholesome breezes which come from the Apennine valleys : the back-windows, which are extremely large, let in, as it were, the vineyards, as do the folding-doors, but you get the latter view through the gallery. Along that side of this dining-room where there are no windows, runs a private stair-case for the greater conveniency of serving at entertainments ; at the farther end is a chamber from whence the eye is entertained with a view of the

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ipsa quam vineae praebeant. Subest cryptoporticus subterraneae similis; aestate incluso frigore riget contentaque aëre suo nec desiderat auras nec admittit.

Post utramque cryptoporticum, unde triclinium desinit, incipit porticus ante medium diem hiberna, inclinato die aestiva. Hac adeuntur diaetae duae, quarum in altera cubicula quattuor, altera tria, ut circumit sol, aut sole utuntur aut umbra. Hanc dispositionem amoenitatemque tectorum longe lateque praecedat hippodromus. Medius patescit statimque intrantium oculis totus offertur, platanis circumitur; illae hedera vestiuntur utque summae suis ita imae alienis frondibus virent. Hedera truncum et ramos pererrat vicinasque platanos transitu suo copulat. Has buxus interiacet; exteriores buxos circumvenit laurus umbraeque platanorum suam confert. Rectus hic hippodromi limes, in extrema parte hemicyclio frangitur mutatque faciem; cupressis ambitur et tegitur densiore umbra opacior nigriorque; interioribus circulis (sunt enim plures) purissimum diem recipit. Inde etiam rosas effert umbrarumque frigus non ingrato sole distinguit.

Finito vario illo multiplicique curvamine recto

vineyards, and (what is equally agreeable) of the gallery. Underneath this room is a gallery resembling a crypt, which in the midst of summer heats retains its pent-up chilliness, and, enjoying its own atmosphere, neither admits nor wants the refreshment of external breezes.

Behind both these galleries, at the end of the dining-room, stands a portico, which as the day is more or less advanced, serves either for winter or summer use. It leads to two different apartments, one containing four chambers, the other three, which enjoy, as the day progresses, alternately sun and shade. In the front of these agreeable buildings lies a very spacious hippodrome, entirely open in the middle, by which means the eye, upon your first entrance, takes in its whole extent at one view. It is encompassed on every side with plane-trees covered with ivy, so that while their heads flourish with their own green, their bodies enjoy a borrowed verdure; and the ivy twining round the trunk and branches, spreads from tree to tree, and connects them together. Between each plane-tree are planted box-trees, and behind these, bay-trees, which blend their shade with that of the planes. The raised path around the hippodrome, which here runs straight, bends at the farther end into a semi-circle and takes on a new aspect, being embowered in cypress-trees and obscured by their denser and more gloomy shade; while the inward circular alleys (for there are several) enjoy the full sun. Farther on, there are roses too along the path, and the cool shade is pleasantly alternated with sunshine.

Having passed through these manifold winding alleys, the path resumes a straight course, and at the

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

limiti redditur nec huic uni ; nam viae plures intercedentibus buxis dividuntur. Alibi pratulum, alibi ipsa buxus intervenit in formas mille discripta, litteris <sup>1</sup> interdum, quae modo nomen domini dicunt, modo artificis. Alternis metulae surgunt, alternis inserta sunt poma, et in opere urbanissimo subita velut illati ruris imitatio. Medium spatium brevioribus utrimque platanis adornatur. Post has acanthus hinc inde lubricus et flexuosus, deinde plures figurae pluraque nomina.

In capite stibadium candido marmore vite protegitur ; vitem quattuor columellae Carystiae subeunt. Ex stibadio aqua velut expressa cubantium pondere sipunculis effluit, cavato lapide suscipitur, gracili marmore continetur atque ita occulte temperatur, ut impleat nec redundet. Gustatorium graviorque cena margini imponitur, levior navicularum et avium figuris innatans circumit. Contra fons egerit aquam et recipit ; nam expulsa in altum in se cadit iunctisque hiatibus et absorbetur et tollitur.

E regione stibadii adversum cubiculum tantum stibadio reddit ornatus, quantum accipit ab illo. Marmore splendet, valvis in viridia prominet et exit,

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<sup>1</sup> litteris *Fpra*, *Otto*, *Müller*, litteras *MD*, *Bipons*, *K*.

<sup>a</sup> *gustatorium*, a tray or dish of *hors d'œuvres*.

same time divides into several tracks, separated by box-hedges. In one place you have a little meadow ; in another the box is interposed in groups, and cut into a thousand different forms ; sometimes into letters, expressing the name of the master, or again that of the artificer : whilst here and there little obelisks rise intermixed alternately with fruit-trees : when on a sudden, in the midst of this elegant regularity, you are surprised with an imitation of the negligent beauties of rural nature ; in the centre of which lies a spot surrounded with a knot of dwarf plane-trees. Beyond these are interspersed clumps of the smooth and twining acanthus ; then come a variety of figures and names cut in box.

At the upper end is a semi-circular bench of white marble, shaded with a vine which is trained upon four small pillars of Carystian marble. Water gushing through several little pipes from under this bench, as if it were pressed out by the weight of the persons who repose themselves upon it, falls into a stone cistern underneath, from whence it is received into a fine polished marble basin, so artfully contrived that it is always full without ever overflowing. When I sup here, the tray of whets<sup>a</sup> and larger dishes are placed round the margin, while the smaller ones swim about in the form of little ships and water-fowl. Opposite this is a fountain which is incessantly emptying and filling : for the water, which it throws up a great height, falling back again into it, is by means of connected openings returned as fast as it is received.

Fronting the bench (and which reflects as great an ornament to it, as it borrows from it) stands a chamber of lustrous marble, whose doors project and

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alia viridia superioribus inferioribusque fenestris suspicit despicitque. Mox zothecula refugit quasi in cubiculum idem atque aliud. Lectus hic et undique fenestrae, et tamen lumen obscurum umbra premente. Nam laetissima vitis per omne tectum in culmen nititur et ascendit. Non secus ibi quam in nemore iaceas, imbrem tantum tamquam in nemore non sentias. Hic quoque fons nascitur simulque subducitur. Sunt locis pluribus disposita sedilia e marmore, quae ambulatione fessos ut cubiculum ipsum iuvant. Fonticuli sedilibus adiacent; per totum hippodromum inducti fistulis strepunt rivi, et, qua manus duxit, sequuntur. His nunc illa viridia, nunc haec, interdum simul omnia lavantur.<sup>1</sup>

Vitasset iam dudum, ne viderer argutior, nisi proposuissem omnes angulos tecum epistula circumire. Neque enim verebar, ne laboriosum esset legenti tibi, quod visenti non fuisset, praesertim cum interquiescere, si liberet, depositaque epistula quasi residere saepius posses. Praeterea indulsi amori meo; amo enim, quae maxima ex parte ipse inchoavi aut inchoata percolui. In summam (cur enim non aperiā tibi vel iudicium meum vel errorem?) primum ego officium scriptoris existimo, ut titulum suum legat atque

<sup>1</sup> lavantur *Bipons*, Müller, iuvantur *Fa*, laetantur *p*.



open into a lawn ; from its upper and lower windows the eye ranges upward or downward over other spaces of verdure. Next to this is a little private closet (which though it is distinct may be laid into the same room) furnished with a couch ; and notwithstanding it has windows on every side, yet it enjoys a very agreeable gloominess, by means of a flourishing vine which climbs to the top, and entirely overshades it. Here you may lie and fancy yourself in a wood, with this difference only, that you are not exposed to the rain. Here, too, a fountain rises and instantly disappears. In different quarters are disposed several marble seats, which serve, no less than the chamber, as so many reliefs after one is wearied with walking. Near each seat is a little fountain ; and throughout the whole hippodrome small rills conveyed through pipes run murmuring along, where-soever the hand of art has thought proper to conduct them ; watering here and there different spots of verdure, and in their progress bathing the whole.

I should have avoided ere this the appearance of being too minute in detail, if I had not proposed to lead you by this letter into every corner of my house and gardens. But I am not afraid you will think it a trouble to read of a place, which you would think it none to survey ; especially as you can take a rest whenever you please, sit down as it were, by laying aside my letter. Besides I have indulged the fondness which I confess I feel for what was mostly either put in hand, or carried to perfection, by myself. To sum up (for why should I conceal from my friends my sentiments whether right or wrong ?) I hold it the first duty of an author to con his title-page, and frequently ask himself what he set out to

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

identidem interroget se, quid coeperit scribere, sciatque, si materiae immoratur, non esse longum, longissimum, si aliquid arcessit atque attrahit.

Vides, quot versibus Homerus, quot Virgilius arma, hic Aeneae, Achillis ille, describat; brevis tamen uterque est, quia facit, quod instituit. Vides, ut Aratus minutissima etiam sidera consecetur et colligat; modum tamen servat. Non enim excursus hic eius, sed opus ipsum est. Similiter nos, ut parva magnis, cum totam villam oculis tuis subicere conemur, si nihil inductum et quasi devium loquimur, non epistula, quae describit, sed villa, quae describitur, magna est.

Verum illuc, unde coepi, ne secundum legem meam iure reprehendar, si longior fuero in hoc, in quod excessi. Habes causas, cur ego Tuscos meos Tusculanis, Tiburtinis Praenestinisque meis praeponam. Nam super illa, quae retuli, altius ibi otium et pinguius eoque securius; nulla necessitas togae, nemo arcessitor ex proximo; placida omnia et quiescentia, quod ipsum salubritati regionis ut purius caelum, ut aër liquidior accedit. Ibi animo, ibi corpore, maxime valeo. Nam studiis animum, venatu corpus exerceo. Mei quoque nusquam salubrius degunt; usque adhuc certe neminem ex iis, quos

write ; and he may be assured if he closely pursues his subject he cannot be tedious ; whereas if he drags in extraneous matters, he will be tedious to the last degree.

You see how many lines Homer and Virgil devote respectively to describing the arms of Achilles and the arms of Aeneas ; yet each poet is succinct, because he carries out his original design. Aratus, you see, keeps due proportion, though he traces and groups the minutest stars ; for this is no digression on his part, but his main subject. In the same manner (to compare small things with great), if endeavouring to bring my whole villa before your eyes, I have not wandered into any thing foreign, or, as it were, devious, it is not my letter, which describes, but the villa, which is described, that is to be deemed large.

But not to dwell any longer upon this digression lest I should myself be condemned by the maxim I have just laid down ; I have now informed you why I prefer my Tuscan villa, to those which I possess at Tusculum, Tiber, and Praeneste. Besides the advantages already mentioned, I there enjoy a securer, as it is a more profound leisure ; I never need put on full dress ; nobody calls from next door on urgent business. All is calm and composed ; which contributes, no less than its clear air and unclouded sky, to the salubrity of the spot. There I am peculiarly blessed with health of body and cheerfulness of mind, for I keep my mind in proper exercise by study and my body by hunting. And indeed there is no place which agrees better with all my household ; I am sure, at least, I have not yet lost one (under favour be it spoken) of all

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

eduxeram mecum (venia sit dicto), ibi amisi. Di modo in posterum hoc mihi gaudium, hanc gloriam loco servant. Vale.

### VII

C. PLINIUS CALVISIO SUO S.

Nec heredem institui nec praecipere posse rem publicam constat; Saturninus autem, qui nos reliquit heredes, quadrantem reipublicae nostrae, deinde pro quadrante praeceptionem quadringentorum milium dedit. Hoc, si ius aspicias, irritum, si defuncti voluntatem, ratum et firmum est. Mihi autem defuncti voluntas (vereor, quam in partem iurisconsulti, quod sum dicturus, accipiant) antiquior iure est, utique in eo, quod ad communem patriam voluit pervenire. An, cui de meo sestertium sedecies contuli, huic quadringentorum milium paulo amplius tertiam partem ex adventicio denegem?

Scio te quoque a iudicio meo non abhorrere, cum eandem rem publicam ut civis optimus diligas. Velim ergo, cum proxime decuriones contrahentur, quid sit iuris, indices, parce tamen et modeste; deinde subiungas nos quadringenta milia offerre, sicut praecepit Saturninus. Illius hoc munus, illius liberalitas; nostrum tantum obsequium

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## BOOK V. vi.-vii

those I brought with me hither. May the gods continue this happiness to *me*, and this glory to my *villa* ! Farewell.

### VII

#### TO CALVISIUS

IT is certain the law does not allow a corporate city to inherit any estate by will, or to receive a legacy. Saturninus, however, who has appointed me his heir, has left a fourth part of his estate to our corporation of Comum ; which devise he afterwards changed into an absolute legacy of 400,000 sesterces. This bequest, in a legal view, is void ; but, looking to the intention of the deceased, is perfectly valid. Now to me (though I am afraid the lawyers will not be pleased with what I say) such intentions are of higher force than any law, especially in a case where the deceased meant to benefit his native town, which is also mine. It would be extremely inconsistent in me, who made it a present of eleven hundred thousand sesterces out of my own patrimony, to withhold from it a benefaction of a little more than a third part of that sum, out of a windfall.

You, who have the affection of a loyal citizen for this same commonwealth, will join with me, I dare say, in these sentiments. I wish therefore you would, at the next assembly of the town-council, acquaint them, in a brief unassuming style, how the law stands in this case ; then add that I shall pay them 400,000 sesterces, as bequeathed by Saturninus. You will represent it as *his* present and *his* liberality ; and that I merely comply with his wishes. I forbear

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

vocetur. Haec ego scribere publice supersedi, primum quod memineram pro necessitudine amicitiae nostrae, pro facultate prudentiae tuae et debere te et posse perinde meis ac tuis partibus fungi, deinde quia verebar, ne modum, quem tibi in sermone custodire facile est, tenuisse in epistula non viderer. Nam sermonem vultus, gestus, vox ipsa moderatur, epistula omnibus commendationibus destituta malignitati interpretantium exponitur. Vale.

### VIII

C. PLINIUS TITINIO CAPITONI SUO S.

SUADES, ut historiam scribam, et suades non solus; multi hoc me saepe monuerunt, et ego volo, non quia commode facturum esse confidam (id enim temere credas nisi expertus), sed quia mihi pulchrum in primis videtur non pati occidere, quibus aeternitas debeatur, aliorumque famam cum sua extendere. Me autem nihil aequae ac diuturnitatis amor et cupido sollicitat, res homine dignissima, eo praesertim, qui nullius sibi conscius culpa posteritatis memoriam non reformidet. Itaque diebus ac noctibus cogito, 'si qua me quoque possim tollere humo';<sup>1</sup> id enim voto meo sufficit, illud supra votum 'victorque virum volitare per ora.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Georgics* iii. 8.

<sup>2</sup> *ib.* iii. 9.

## BOOK V. vii.-viii

writing to their council concerning this affair, reflecting that our strict friendship obliges, as your abounding good sense enables you, to act for me as you would for yourself; besides, I am afraid I should not seem to have preserved that just medium in my letter, which you will much easier be able to do in a speech. The countenance, the gesture, and even the tone of voice governs and determines the sense of the speaker: whereas a letter, being destitute of all recommendations, is liable to be misinterpreted by malicious minds. Farewell.

### VIII

#### TO TITINIUS CAPITO

You are not singular in the advice you give me to undertake the writing of history; it is a work which many have frequently pressed upon me; and I strongly incline to it. Not that I have any confidence of success (which you would think presumptuous in a tiro), but because I hold it a noble task to rescue from oblivion those who deserve to be eternally remembered, and extend the fame of others, at the same time as our own. Nothing, I confess, so strongly affects me as the desire of a lasting name: a passion highly worthy of the human breast, especially of one, who, not being conscious to himself of any ill, is not afraid of being remembered by posterity. It is the continual subject therefore of my thoughts:

“How from the lowly ground I too may rise,”  
for to that I moderate my prayers; the sequel, to be  
“Wafted victorious by the breath of men”  
is much beyond them.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

‘Quamquam o!’ sed hoc satis est, quod prope sola historia polliceri videtur. Orationi enim et carmini parva gratia, nisi eloquentia est summa, historia quoque modo scripta delectat. Sunt enim homines natura curiosi et quamlibet nuda rerum cognitione capiuntur, ut qui sermunculis etiam fabellisque ducantur. Me vero ad hoc studium impellit domesticum quoque exemplum. Avunculus meus idemque per adoptionem pater historias, et quidem religiosissime scripsit. Invenio autem apud sapientes honestissimum esse maiorum vestigia sequi, si modo recto itinere praecesserint.

Cur ergo cunctor? Egi magnas et graves causas. Has, etiamsi mihi tenuis ex eis spes, destino retrac-tare, ne tantus ille labor meus, ni hoc, quod reliquum est studii, addidero, mecum pariter intercidat. Nam si rationem posteritatis habeas, quidquid non est peractum, pro non inchoato est. Dices: ‘Potes simul et rescribere actiones et componere historiam.’ Utinam! sed utrumque tam magnum est, ut abunde sit alterum efficere. Unodevicesimo aetatis anno dicere in foro coepi et nunc demum, quid praestare debeat orator, adhuc tamen per caliginem video. Quid, si huic oneri novum accesserit?

Habet quidem oratio et historia multa communia,

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<sup>a</sup> The unexpressed wish is for the victory just renounced. The words are those of Mnestheus, who seeing himself distanced in a race, exclaims that he now strives not to *win* (“Yet O!—”), but only to escape the disgrace of coming in last.—*Aen.* v. 195.      <sup>b</sup> See iii. 5.



## BOOK V. viii

"Yet O!"—<sup>a</sup> However, the former fate is enough for me, and History seems almost the only means that can assure it. Oratory and Poetry meet small favour unless carried to the highest point of eloquence; but History, however executed, always pleases, for mankind are naturally inquisitive, and information, however baldly presented, has its charm for beings who adore even small talk and anecdote. But, besides this, I have an example in my own family that incites me to this pursuit, my uncle and adoptive father <sup>b</sup> having been a historian, and that a very accurate one; and I read in the philosophers that 'tis a high virtue to tread in the steps of our ancestors, when they have gone before us in the right path.

Why then, you ask, do I yet delay? My reason is this: I have pleaded some very important causes, and (though I build but small hopes on them) I design to revise my speeches, lest for want of this last care, all the pains they cost me should be thrown away, and they perish with their author; for as far as posterity is concerned, a work that has not received the last polish counts no more than if you had never begun it. You will tell me, perhaps, I might correct my speeches and write history at the same time. I wish I could; but they are both such great undertakings, that to complete either of them would more than satisfy me. I was but nineteen when I first appeared at the bar; and yet it is only now at last I perceive (and that in truth but dimly) what is essential to a complete orator. How then shall I be able to support the weight of an additional burthen?

It is true, indeed, history and oratory have many

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

sed plura diversa in his ipsis, quae communia videntur. Narrat illa, narrat haec, sed aliter; huic pleraque humilia et sordida et ex medio petita, illi omnia recondita, splendida, excelsa conveniunt; hanc saepius ossa, muscoli, nervi, illam tori quidam et quasi iubae decent; haec vel maxime vi, amaritudine, instantia, illa tractu et suavitate atque etiam dulcedine placet; postremo alia verba, alius sonus, alia constructio. Nam plurimum refert, ut Thucydides ait, κτῆμα sit an ἀγώνισμα;<sup>1</sup> quorum alterum oratio, alterum historia est.

His ex causis non adducor, ut duo dissimilia et hoc ipso diversa, quod maxima, confundam misceamque, ne tanta quasi colluvione turbatus ibi faciam, quod hic debeo; ideoque interim veniam, ne a forensibus<sup>2</sup> verbis discedam, advocandi peto. Tu tamen iam nunc cogita, quae potissimum tempora aggrediamur. Vetera et scripta aliis? Parata inquisitio, sed onerosa collatio. Intacta et nova? Graves offensae, levis gratia. Nam praeter id, quod in tantis vitiis hominum plura culpanda sunt quam laudanda,

<sup>1</sup> *Thuc. i. 22.*

<sup>2</sup> forensibus *Dpra, Müller, meis M, Bipons, K.*

## BOOK V. viii

common features; yet in these very apparent resemblances, there are several contrasts. Both deal in narrative, but each after a different fashion. Oratory must concern itself as a rule with the low and vulgar facts of every-day life; History treats only of what is recondite, splendid, elevated; a dry, forcible, nervous style befits the one, but embellishments, and what one may call *top-knots*, the other. Oratory pleases most when it is vigorous, biting, and vehement; History, when it is diffusive, bland, and even dulcet. Lastly, diction, rhythm, and the structure of the periods, are distinctly different in these two arts. For there is all the difference in the world, as Thucydides observes, between a *possession* and a *prize-composition*; the first of which terms applies to History, the second to Oratory.

For these reasons I decline to intermingle two dissimilar pursuits, which are opposite just because they are both so highly important; lest distraught by a sort of conflux, I should do in one case what is only proper to the other. Therefore (to keep to my professional language) I must beg leave the cause may be adjourned. In the meanwhile I refer it to your consideration, what period of history I shall commence upon. Those remote times which have been treated of already by others? Here, indeed, the materials will be ready to my hands, but the collating of the several historians will be extremely troublesome. Or shall I write of the present times, and those wherein no other author has gone before me? If so, I may probably give offence to many and please but few. For in an age so over-run with vice, you will find infinitely more to condemn than approve; yet your

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

tum, si laudaveris, parcus, si culpaveris, nimius fuisse dicaris, quamvis illud plenissime, hoc restrictissime feceris.

Sed haec me non retardant; est enim mihi pro fide satis animi. Illud peto, praesternas, ad quod hortaris, eligasque materiam, ne mihi iam scribere parato alia rursus cunctationis et morae iusta ratio nascatur. Vale.

### IX

C. PLINIUS SEMPRONIO<sup>1</sup> RUFO SUO S.

DESCENDERAM in basilicam Iuliam auditurus, quibus proxima comperendinatione respondere debebam. Sedebant iudices, decemviri venerant, obversabantur advocati, silentium longum, tandem a praetore nuntius. Dimittuntur centumviri, eximitur dies me gaudente, qui numquam ita paratus sum, ut non mora laeter. Causa dilationis Nepos praetor, qui legibus quaerit. Proposuerat breve edictum, admonebat accusatores, admonebat reos exsecuturum se, quae senatus consulto continerentur. Suberat edicto senatus consultum hoc:<sup>2</sup> omnes, qui quid negotii haberent, iurare, prius quam agerent, iuebantur nihil se ob advocationem cuiquam dedisse, promisisse,

<sup>1</sup> SEMPRONIO *add. Havet ex Ricc.*

<sup>2</sup> sen. cons. hoc: omnes Müller, sen. cons.: hoc omnes *rell.*

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<sup>a</sup> Where the Centumviral Court held its sessions.

<sup>b</sup> *i.e.* that Praetor, who was President of the Centumviral Court. <sup>c</sup> See iv. 29.

## BOOK V. viii.-ix

praise, though ever so lavish, will be thought too reserved ; and your censure, though ever so cautious, too profuse.

However, this does not at all discourage me ; for I want not sufficient resolution to bear testimony to truth. I expect, then, that you prepare the way which you have pointed out to me, and determine what subject I shall fix upon for my history, that when I am ready to enter upon the task you have assigned me, I may not be delayed by any new difficulty of importance. Farewell.

### IX

#### TO SEMPRONIUS RUFUS

I WENT into the Julian Basilica <sup>a</sup> to attend a cause in which at the next sitting I was to reply. The jurors had taken their seats, the presiding magistrates were arrived, the opposing counsel had taken their places ; after a long pause, came at last a messenger from the Praetor.<sup>b</sup> The Court broke up at once, and the case was adjourned—much to my delight, who am never so well prepared, but that I am glad of delay. The occasion of this postponement was an edict of Nepos,<sup>c</sup> the Praetor for criminal causes, wherein he bade all plaintiffs and defendants in any cause before him take notice, that he should strictly enforce the decree of the Senate annexed to his edict. Which decree ran as follows—“ All persons who have any law-suit depending are hereby ordered to take an oath before proceeding with their suit that they have not given, promised, or become caution for, any fee to any advocate in consideration

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

cavisse. His enim verbis ac mille praeterea et venire advocaciones et emi vetabantur. Peractis tamen negotiis permittebatur pecuniam dumtaxat decem milium dare.

Hoc facto Nepotis commotus praetor, qui centumviralibus praesidebat, deliberaturus, an sequeretur exemplum, inopinatum nobis otium dedit. Interim tota civitate Nepotis edictum carpitur, laudatur. Multi : ' Invenimus, qui curva corrigeret. Quid ? ante hunc praetores non fuerunt ? quis autem hic est, qui emendet publicos mores ? ' Alii contra : ' Rectissime fecit ; initurus magistratum iura recognovit, senatus consulta legit, reprimat foedissimas pactiones, rem pulcherrimam turpissime venire non patitur.' Tales ubique sermones ; qui tamen alterutram in partem ex eventu praevalerent. Est omnino iniquum, sed usu receptum, quod honesta consilia vel turpia, prout male aut prospere cedunt, ita vel probantur vel reprehenduntur. Inde plerumque eadem facta modo diligentiae, modo vanitatis, modo libertatis, modo furoris nomen accipiunt. Vale.

### X

C. PLINIUS SUETONIO TRANQUILLO SUO S.

LIBERA tandem hendecasyllaborum meorum fidem, qui scripta tua communibus amicis sponderunt.

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of his undertaking their cause." In these terms, with a deal more to the same effect, the decree prohibits the buying and selling of legal advocacy. However a gratuity of ten thousand sesterces is permitted to be given, after a case is concluded.

The Praetor of the Centumviral Court, being alarmed at this action of Nepos, gave us this unexpected holiday in order to deliberate whether he should follow the example. In the meanwhile the whole town is divided into critics and applauders of this edict. "We have got someone at last (say a large party) to put things straight. But pray was there never a Praetor before? Who is this man, after all, that sets up for a reformer?" Others, on the contrary, say, "He has taken a very proper step; upon entering into his office, he examined the statutes and read the decrees of the Senate; he has repressed a most indecent traffic, and will not suffer a noble profession to be defiled by venality." These are the reflections which are universally thrown out upon this occasion; but which view is to become general, the event alone will determine. It is the usual though inequitable method of the world, to pronounce an action to be either right or wrong, as it is attended with good or ill success; in consequence of which you shall hear the very same conduct attributed at different times to zeal or folly, to independence or insanity. Farewell.

X

TO SÜETONIUS TRANQUILLUS

It is time you should acquit the promise my hendecasyllabic verses gave to our common friends,

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Appellantur cotidie et flagitantur ; ac iam periculum est, ne cogantur ad exhibendum formulam accipere. Sum et ipse in edendo haesitator ; tu tamen meam quoque cunctationem tarditatemque vicisti. Proinde aut rumpe iam moras aut cave, ne eosdem illos libellos, quos tibi hendecasyllabi nostri blanditiis elicere non possunt, convicio scazontes extorqueant. Perfectum opus absolutumque est nec iam splendet lima sed atteritur. Patere me videre titulum tuum ; patere audire describi, legi, venire volumina Tranquilli mei. Aequum est nos in amore tam mutuo eandem percipere ex te voluptatem, qua tu perfrueris ex nobis. Vale.

### XI

C. PLINIUS CALPURNIO FABATO PROSOCERO SUO S.

RECEPI litteras tuas, ex quibus cognovi speciosissimam te porticum sub tuo filiiue tui nomine dedicasse sequenti die in portarum ornatum pecuniam promisisse, ut initium novae liberalitatis esset consummatio prioris. Gaudeo primum tua gloria, cuius ad me pars aliqua pro necessitudine nostra redundat ; deinde quod memoriam soceri mei pulcherrimis operibus video proferri ; postremo quod

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## BOOK V. x.-xi

of your works. The world is every day impatiently inquiring after them, and there is already some danger of their being served with an order to "produce documents." I am myself a good deal backward in publishing, but your slowness and hesitancy are more than a match for even mine. You must hasten your hand, however, otherwise the severity of my satiric verses may perhaps extort from you those self-same writings which the blandishments of my softer Muse could not obtain. Your work is already arrived to that degree of perfection, that the file can only weaken, not polish it. Allow me then the pleasure of seeing your title-page, and hearing that books of my dear Tranquillus are being copied out, sold, and read. It is but fair, and agreeable to our mutual friendship, that I should reap from you the same pleasure you enjoy from me. Farewell.

## XI

TO CALPURNIUS FABATUS HIS WIFE'S GRANDFATHER.

YOUR letter informs me that you have dedicated a noble public portico, as a memorial of yourself and your son; and that the next day after that ceremony you engaged to beautify the gates of our city at your own charge, that a fresh act of munificence may crown the completion of a former. I am gratified by an event so conducive to your glory; which, from the connection between us, in some degree redounds to mine; and further pleased to see the memory of my father-in-law delivered down to posterity by such beautiful structures, I rejoice, lastly, at the

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

patria nostra florescit, quam mihi a quocumque excoli iucundum, a te vero laetissimum est.

Quod superest, deos precor, ut animum istum tibi, animo isti tempus quam longissimum tribuant. Nam liquet mihi futurum ut peracto, quod proxime promisisti, inchoes aliud. Nescit enim semel incitata liberalitas stare, cuius pulchritudinem usus ipse commendat. Vale.

### XII

C. PLINIUS SCAURO TERENTIO SUO S.

RECITATURUS oratiunculam, quam publicare cogito, advocavi aliquos, ut revererer, paucos, ut verum audirem. Nam<sup>1</sup> mihi duplex ratio recitandi, una, ut sollicitudine intendar; altera, ut admonear, si quid forte me ut meum fallit. Tuli, quod petebam, inveni, qui mihi copiam consilii sui facerent. Ipse praeterea quaedam emendanda adnotavi. Emendavi librum, quem misi tibi. Materiam ex titulo cognosces, cetera liber explicabit, quem iam nunc oportet ita consuescere, ut sine praefatione intelligatur. Tu velim quid de universo, quid de parti-

<sup>1</sup> Nam *M*, *Bipons*. *K*, Etenim *Dpra*, *Müller*.

## BOOK V. xi.-xii

prosperity of our native province ; everything that tends to her honour is agreeable to me, by what hand soever it may be conferred, but infinitely delightful when it is by yours.

I now have only to pray that Heaven may long grant you this generous disposition, and vouchsafe you many years in which to exert it : for I see clearly that you will no sooner have carried out your promised benefaction, than you will begin upon some other. Generosity, when once she is set forward, knows not how to stop her progress ; as her beauty is of that order which grows the more engaging upon nearer acquaintance. Farewell.

## XII

### TO TERENTIUS SCAURUS

DESIGNING to recite a little speech which I think of publishing, I invited an audience ; sufficient to inspire me with diffidence, though at the same time small enough to secure my hearing the truth of their sentiments. For I have a double view in these rehearsals ; the first is, that solicitude may stimulate me to do my best ; the next, that any errors (which, being my own, might escape my notice) be pointed out to me. I succeeded in my object, and some present obliged me with their advice ; moreover, I observed myself some passages which required correction. I made a fair copy of the piece, which I now send you. The subject of it will appear from the title, and for the rest I refer you to the copy itself, which it behoves you to have already so much acquaintance with, as not to stand in need of a preface to explain it. I beg you would sincerely

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

bus sentias scribas mihi. Ero enim vel cautior in continendo vel constantior in edendo, si huc vel illuc auctoritas tua accesserit. Vale.

### XIII

C. PLINIUS VALERIANO SUO S.

ET tu rogas, et ego promisi, si rogasses, scripturum me tibi, quem habuisset eventum postulatio Nepotis circa Tuscilium Nominatum. Inductus est Nominatus, egit ipse pro se, nullo accusante. Nam legati Vicetinorum non modo non presserunt eum, verum etiam sublevaverunt.

Summa defensionis, non fidem sibi in advocatione, sed constantiam defuisse; descendisse ut acturum atque etiam in curia visum, deinde sermonibus amicorum deterritum recessisse; monitum enim, ne desiderio senatoris, non iam quasi de nundinis, sed quasi de gratia, fama, dignitate certantis tam pertinaciter, praesertim in senatu, repugnaret, alioqui maiorem invidiam quam proxime passurum.<sup>1</sup> Erat sane prius, a paucis tamen acclamatum exeunti. Subiunxit preces multumque lacrimarum; quin etiam tota actione homo in dicendo exercitatus operam dedit, ut deprecari magis (id enim et favorabilius et tutius) quam defendi videretur.

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<sup>1</sup> passurum *M*, *Bipons*, *K*, passurus *Dpra*, *Müller*.

<sup>a</sup> See Letter 4 of this book.

## BOOK V. xii.-xiii

tell me your sentiments of the whole, and of its several parts. I shall be more cautious to suppress, or bold to publish it, as your judgement shall decide either way. Farewell.

### XIII

#### TO VALERIANUS

You wish to hear (what I promised to inform you, if you should wish it) how Nepos succeeded with his application against Tuscilius Nominatus.<sup>a</sup> The latter being brought before the Senate, pleaded his own cause. No accuser came forward; for the Vicentine delegates, so far from pressing their charge, actually supported him.

The sum of his defence was: "That not his integrity, but his courage, had failed him as counsel for the Vicentines; that he came down intending to plead, and actually appeared in the Senate-house, but withdrew in alarm at his friends' remarks. For they warned him not to persist in opposing (especially in the Senate) the inclinations of a Senator, who did not contend so much against the fact itself, as for his own credit and character; if he did not desist, they said, he would undergo much greater odium than he had just before excited." (And it is true that on the former occasion he was hooted, though only by a few, as he went out.) He proceeded to implore clemency, with many tears; nay, in fact, throughout his whole speech (as he is a man extremely well versed in the arts of oratory) he was careful to give the impression of excusing, rather than justifying himself, thereby taking the more acceptable and safer course.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Absolutus est sententia designati consulis Afranii Dextri, cuius haec summa, melius quidem Nominatum fuisse facturum, si causam Vicetinorum eodem animo, quo susceperat, pertulisset; quia tamen in hoc genus culpa non fraude incidisset nihilque dignum animadversione admisisse vinceretur, liberandum, ita ut Vicetinis, quod acceperat, redderet. Ad-senserunt omnes praeter Flavium<sup>1</sup> Aprum. Is interdicendum ei advocationibus in quinquennium censuit et quamvis neminem auctoritate traxisset, constanter in sententia mansit; quin etiam Dextrum, qui primus diversum censuerat, prolata lege de senatu habendo iurare coëgit e republica esse, quod censuisset. Cui quamquam legitimae postulationi a quibusdam reclamatum est. Exprobrare enim censi ambitionem videbatur.

Sed, priusquam sententiae dicerentur, Nigrinus, tribunus plebis, recitavit libellum disertum et gravem, quo questus est venire advocationes, venire etiam praevaricationes, in lites coiri et gloriae loco poni ex spoliis civium magnos et statos redditus. Recitavit capita legum, admonuit senatus consulti, in fine dixit petendum ab optimo principe, ut, quia leges, quia senatus consulta contemnerentur, ipse tantis vitiis

<sup>1</sup> Flavium *a*, *Bipons*, *Momms.*, *Müller*, *Fabium M K.*

## BOOK V. xiii

Afranius Dexter, the consul-elect, moved his acquittal in words to this effect: "Nominatus would have done better to carry through the cause of the Vicentines with the same resolution he undertook it; however, since he had not incurred this species of guilt with intent to defraud, nor been convicted of any punishable offence, he should be discharged on condition of returning his fees to the Vicentines." The whole Senate agreed to this motion except Flavius Aper: his verdict was, that Nominatus should be forbidden to practise as an advocate for five years; and though his influence could not win him a single supporter, he stood firm in his opinion. He even obliged Dexter, as proposer of the contrary motion, to make oath that he had proposed it *for the good of the republic*; agreeably to a law, which he cited, concerning the procedure of the senate. This requisition, though certainly in order, was opposed by some as seeming to cast an imputation of partiality upon Dexter.

But before the votes of the house were collected, Nigrinus, a tribune of the people, read a very elegant and weighty remonstrance, wherein he complained that the advocates took money not only to defend, but actually to betray the cause of their clients; that law suits were settled by collusion, and that, instead of glory, a large and fixed revenue from the plundering of citizens was now the goal of the legal profession. He read out the headings of relevant statutes; called attention to the decree of the Senate: and concluded by saying that since both the laws and the Senate had fallen into contempt, our excellent Emperor ought to be petitioned to remedy these crying evils himself.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

mederetur. Pauci dies, et liber principis severus et tamen moderatus; leges ipsum; est in publicis actis.

Quam me iuvat, quod in causis agendis non modo pactione, dono, munere, verum etiam xeniis semper abstinui! Oportet quidem, quae sunt inhonesta, non quasi illicita, sed quasi pudenda, vitare; iucundum tamen, si prohiberi publice videas, quod numquam tibi ipse permiseris. Erit fortasse, immo non dubie huius propositi mei et minor laus et obscurior fama, cum omnes ex necessitate facient, quod ego sponte faciebam. Interim fruor voluptate, cum alii divinum me, alii meis rapinis, meae avaritiae occursum per ludum ac iocum dictitant. Vale.

### XIV

C. PLINIUS PONTIO ALLIFANO<sup>1</sup> SUO S.

SECESSERAM in municipium, cum mihi nuntiatum est Cornutum Tertullum accepisse Aemiliae viae curam. Exprimere non possum, quanto sim gaudio adfectus, et ipsius et meo nomine, ipsius, quod, sit licet, sicut est, ab omni ambitione longe remotus, debet tamen ei iucundus esse honor ultro datus,

<sup>1</sup> ALLIFANO *add. Müller ex Ricc.*

<sup>a</sup> The maintenance of each of the great roads leading out of Rome was under the charge of an ex-consul. The



## BOOK V. xiii.—xiv

Accordingly, a few days after, an imperial edict was published, drawn up in severe, yet moderate terms ; this you will find in the official gazette.

How it rejoices me, that, in my practice as advocate, I have always refrained from making any bargain, or accepting any fee, reward, or so much as a friendly present. One ought, no doubt, to avoid whatever is dishonourable, not so much because it is illegal, as because it is shameful. But still there is pleasure in seeing a practice forbidden by the State, which one never suffered one's self to fall into. The credit and renown of my fixed rule in these matters may, or rather most certainly will, be considerably diminished and eclipsed, when everybody does on compulsion what I used to do of my own choice. In the meantime, however, I take a pleasure in my friends' banter, some of whom call me "the godlike Pliny," while others never tire of assuring me this edict was particularly levelled against my avarice and rapine. Farewell.

### XIV

#### TO PONTIUS ALLIFANUS

I WAS taking holiday at Comum when I heard that Cornutus Tertullus was appointed Curator of the Aemilian way.<sup>a</sup> This news was inexpressibly agreeable to me, both upon his account and my own : upon his, because though ambition should be (as it certainly is) far removed from his heart, yet this unsought honour cannot but be acceptable to him ; Aemilian Way led to Milan, through Bologna, Modena, Parma and Piacenza.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

meo, quod aliquanto magis me delectat mandatum mihi officium, postquam par Cornuto datum video. Neque enim augeri dignitate quam aequari bonis gratius. Cornuto autem quid melius, quid sanctius, quid in omni genere laudis ad exemplar antiquitatis expressius? quod mihi cognitum est non fama, qua alioqui optima et meritissima fruitur, sed longis magnisque experimentis.

Una diligimus, una dileximus omnes fere, quos aetas nostra in utroque sexu aemulandos tulit; quae societas amicitiarum artissima nos familiaritate conjunxit. Accessit vinculum necessitudinis publicae. Idem enim mihi, ut scis, collega quasi voto petitus in praefectura aerarii fuit, fuit et in consulatu. Tum ego, qui vir et quantus esset, altissime inspexi, cum sequeretur ut magistrum, ut parentem revererer, quod non tam aetatis maturitate quam vitae merebatur. His ex causis ut illi sic mihi gratulor nec privatim magis quam publice, quod tandem homines non ad pericula ut prius, verum ad honores virtute perveniunt.

In infinitum epistulam extendam, si gaudio meo indulgeam. Praevertor ad ea, quae me agentem hic nuntius deprehendit. Eram cum prosocero meo, eram cum amita uxoris, eram cum amicis diu desideratis, circumibam agellos, audiebam multum rusticarum querelarum, rationes legebam invitae et cursim (aliis

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<sup>a</sup> Pliny was "*curator alvei Tiberis et riparum et cloacarum urbis*," circ. 105-107 A.D. This post, combining conservancy of the Tiber and charge of the sewage system, was also held by an ex-consul.

upon mine, because I am much more gratified to hold my office,<sup>a</sup> now I see one of equal importance bestowed on Cornutus; for the pleasure of promotion exceeds not that of being placed in the same rank with men of worth. And where indeed is Cornutus' superior in worth and integrity? Or who, in every respect, is a more express model of ancient virtue? In this I do not found my judgement upon report, which justly speaks of him in the highest terms; but upon long and frequent experience.

We are, and ever have been, united in regard for almost all the exemplary characters of both sexes which this age has produced; and our common friendships cemented us in the strictest intimacy. A further bond was created by our public relation; Cornutus, you know, was my colleague as Prefect of the Treasury (I might almost say, in answer to my prayers!); my colleague, too, in the consulship. It was then I gained a thorough insight into the nobility of his virtues; while I followed him as a teacher, and revered him as a parent; and that not so much upon account of his age, as his merit. I congratulate myself, therefore, no less than him, and as much upon public as private grounds, that Virtue is now no longer, as formerly, the road to danger, but to office.

But if I give rein to my joyous sentiments, I shall never have finished my letter. Let me turn to what I was about when the messenger arrived with this news. I was in company with my wife's grandfather and aunt, and with friends whose presence I had long missed; I was going the round of my little property, hearing a deal of complaints from the rustics; inspecting accounts—reluctantly and rapidly,

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

enim chartis, aliis sum litteris initiatus) coeperam etiam itineri me praeparare. Nam includor angustiis commeatus eoque ipso, quod delegatum Cornuto audio officium, mei admoneor. Cupio te quoque sub idem tempus Campania tua remittat, ne quis, cum in urbem rediero, contubernio nostro dies pereat. Vale.

### XV

C. PLINIUS ARRIO ANTONINO SUO S.

CUM versus tuos aemulor, tum maxime, quam sint boni, exerior. Ut enim pictores pulchram absolutamque faciem raro nisi in peius effingunt, ita ego ab hoc archetypo laboro et decido. Quo magis hortor, ut quam plurima proferas, quae imitari omnes concupiscant, nemo aut paucissimi possint. Vale.

### XVI

C. PLINIUS AEFULANO<sup>1</sup> MARCELLINO SUO S.

TRISTISSIMUS haec tibi scribo Fundani nostri filia minore defuncta, qua puella nihil umquam festivius, amabilius nec modo longiore vita, sed prope immortalitate, dignius vidi. Nondum annos XIII<sup>2</sup> impleverat, et iam illi anilis prudentia, matronalis

<sup>1</sup> AEFULANO *add. Müller ex Ricc.*

<sup>2</sup> annos XIII *Merrill, from the inscription on her tomb (C.I.L. vi. 16631), quattuordecim codd.*

## BOOK V. xiv.—xvi

for I am a devotee of quite other sorts of documents ! Also, I had begun to prepare for travelling. For I am limited to a short furlough ; and indeed the news of this office being conferred on Cornutus, reminds me to hasten to the duties of my own. I hope your favourite Campania will resign you about the same time, so that when I return to Rome, not a day may be lost to our friendly intercourse. Farewell.

### XV

#### TO ARRIUS ANTONINUS

I AM never more sensible of the excellency of your verses, than when I endeavour to imitate them. As the hand of the painter must nearly always fail, when perfect beauty sits for the picture ; so I labour to catch the graces of this original, and still fall short of them. Let me conjure you then to continue to supply us with many more such models, which every man will have the wish, but few or none the power, to imitate. Farewell.

### XVI

#### TO AEFULANUS MARCELLINUS

I WRITE this to you under the utmost oppression of sorrow : the younger daughter of our friend Fundanus is dead ! Never surely was there a more agreeable or amiable young person, or one who better deserved to have enjoyed a long, I had almost said, an immortal life ! She was scarce thirteen, and already had all the wisdom of age and sedateness of a matron,

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

gravitas erat et tamen suavitas puellaris cum virginali verecundia. Ut illa patris cervicibus inhaerebat! ut nos amicos paternos et amanter et modeste complectebatur! ut nutrices et paedagogos, ut praeceptores, pro suo quemque officio, diligebat! quam studiose, quam intellegenter lectitabat! ut parce custoditeque ludebat! Qua illa temperantia, qua patientia, qua etiam constantia novissimam valetudinem tulit! Medicis obsequebatur, sororem, patrem adhortabatur, ipsamque se destitutam corporis viribus vigore animi sustinebat. Duravit hic illi usque ad extremum nec aut spatio valetudinis aut metu mortis infractus est, quo plures gravioresque nobis causas relinqueret et desiderii et doloris.

O triste plane acerbumque funus! o morte ipsa mortis tempus indignius! iam destinata erat egregio iuveni, iam electus nuptiarum dies, iam nos vocati. Quod gaudium quo moerore mutatum est! Non possum exprimere verbis, quantum animo vulnus acceperim, cum audiivi Fundanum ipsum, ut multa luctuosa dolor invenit, praecipientem, quod in vestes, margarita,<sup>1</sup> gemmas fuerat erogaturus, hoc in tus<sup>2</sup> et unguenta et odores impenderetur. Est quidem ille eruditus et sapiens, ut qui se ab ineunte aetate altioribus studiis artibusque dediderit: sed nunc

<sup>1</sup> margarita *M*, *Bipons*, *K*, margaritas *Dpra*, Müller.

<sup>2</sup> tus *M*, *Bipons*, *K*, tura *Dpra*, Müller.

## BOOK V. xvi

though joined with youthful sweetness and virgin modesty. With what an engaging fondness would she hang upon her father! How affectionately and respectfully embrace us who were his friends! How warm her regard for the nurses, conductors to school, and teachers, who, in their respective offices, had the care and education of her! How studious, how intelligent, at her book, how sparingly and discreetly she indulged in play! With what forbearance, patience, nay courage, did she endure her last illness! She complied with all the directions of her physicians; she encouraged her sister and her father; and when all her strength of body was exhausted, supported herself by the single vigour of her mind. *That*, indeed, continued even to her last moments, unbroken by the pain of a long illness, or the terrors of approaching death; and it is a reflection which makes the loss of her so much the more to be lamented.

O truly hard and bitter doom! And more cruel than death itself, to die at that particular conjuncture! She was contracted to a most worthy youth; the wedding day was fixed, and we were all invited. How sad a change from the highest joy, to the deepest sorrow! How shall I express the wound that pierced my heart, when I heard Fundanus himself (as grief is ever fertile in painful inventions) ordering the money he was to have to laid out upon cloaths, pearls, and jewels for her marriage, to be expended on myrrh and spices for her funeral? He is, indeed, a man of great learning and good sense, having applied himself from his earliest youth to the nobler arts and studies; but all those maxims which he has heard from others, and often inculcated

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

omnia, quae audit, saepeque dixit, aspernatur expulsi-  
sque virtutibus aliis pietatis est totus. Ignosces,  
laudabis etiam, si cogitaveris, quid amiserit. Amisit  
enim filiam, quae non minus mores eius quam os vul-  
tumque referebat, totumque patrem mira similitudine  
exscripserat.

Proinde, si quas ad eum de dolore tam iusto literas  
mittes, memento adhibere solacium non quasi castiga-  
torium et nimis forte, sed molle et humanum. Quod  
ut facilius admittat, multum faciet medii temporis  
spatium. Ut enim crudum adhuc vulnus meden-  
tium manus reformidat, deinde patitur atque ultro  
requirit, sic recens animi dolor consolationes reicit  
ac refugit, mox desiderat et clementer admotis  
acquiescit. Vale.

### XVII

C. PLINIUS VESTRICIO<sup>1</sup> SPURINNAE SUO S.

Scio, quanto opere bonis artibus faveas, quantum  
gaudium capias, si nobiles iuvenes dignum aliquid  
maioribus suis faciant. Quo festinantius nuntio tibi  
fuisse me hodie in auditorio Calpurni Pisonis. Recita-  
bat *καταστερισμῶν* eruditam sane luculentamque mate-  
riam. Scripta elegis erat fluentibus et teneris et  
enodibus, sublimibus etiam, ut poposcit locus. Apte  
enim et varie nunc attollebatur, nunc residebat ;

<sup>1</sup> VESTRICIO *add. Müller ex Ricc.*

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<sup>a</sup> *i.e.* the metamorphosis into stars (*καταστερισμῶν*) of Orion,  
Perseus, Andromeda, etc.



## BOOK V. xvi.-xvii

himself, he now contemns, and every other virtue gives place to his absorbing parental devotion. You will excuse, you will even approve him, when you consider what he has lost. He has lost a daughter who resembled him as closely in manners as in person, and exactly copied out all her father.

If you shall think proper to write to him upon the subject of so reasonable a grief, let me remind you not to use the rougher arguments of consolation, and such as seem to carry a sort of reproof with them, but those of kind and sympathizing humanity. Time will render him more open to such consolations: for as a fresh wound shrinks back from the hand of the surgeon, but by degrees submits to, and even craves for, the means of its cure, so a mind under the first impressions of a misfortune shuns and rejects all consoling reflections, but at length, if applied with tenderness, calmly and willingly acquiesces in them. Farewell.

## XVII

### TO VESTRICIUS SPURINNA

KNOWING, as I do, how much you favour the polite arts, and how greatly you rejoice whenever young men of quality perform some action worthy of their ancestors, I the more speedily inform you that I was to-day one of the audience to whom Calpurnius Piso read a poem he has composed upon a very bright and learned subject, namely, the mythology of the constellations.<sup>a</sup> His numbers, which were elegiac, were soft, flowing, and easy, nor wanted even sublimity when the topic demanded it. His style now rose, now fell, in apt accord with the varying theme; he passed from the

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

excelsa depressis, exilia plenis, severis iucunda mutabat, omnia ingenio pari. Commendabat haec voce suavissima, vocem verecundia ; multum sanguinis, multum sollicitudinis in ore, magna ornamenta recitantis. Etenim nescio quo pacto magis in studiis homines timor quam fiducia decet.

Ne plura (quamquam libet plura, quo sunt pulchriora de iuvene, rariora de nobili) recitatione finita multum ac diu exosculatus adolescentem, qui est acerrimus stimulus monendi, laudibus incitavi, pergeret, qua coepisset, lumenque, quod sibi maiores sui praetulissent, posteris ipse praeferret. Gratulatus sum optimae matri, gratulatus et fratri, qui ex auditorio illo non minorem pietatis gloriam, quam ille alter eloquentiae tulit ; tam notabiliter pro fratre recitante primum metus eius, mox gaudium eminuit.

Di faciant ut talia tibi saepius nuntiem ! Faveo enim saeculo, ne sit sterile et effetum, mireque cupio, ne nobiles nostri nihil in domibus suis pulchrum nisi imagines habeant ; quae nunc mihi hos adolescentes tacite laudare, adhortari et, quod amborum gloriae satis magnum est, agnoscere videntur. Vale.

## BOOK V. xvii

lofty to the low, from the close to the copious, from the grave to the florid, and all with equal ingenuity. These beauties were recommended by a most harmonious voice, which his modest air rendered still more pleasing. His cheeks were flushed, his countenance anxious, traits which highly embellish a reciter ; for bashfulness is somehow more becoming to people when they engage in literary pursuits, than a confident air.

Not to mention farther details (though I am the more inclined to, as they are rather noble in a young man, and rather uncommon in a person of quality), I will only tell you, that when he had finished his recital, I repeatedly embraced the youth with the utmost complacency ; and by warm praise (than which nothing lends advice more pungency) incited him to persevere in the path he had entered, and reflect that lustre on his descendants which his ancestors had imparted to himself. I congratulated his excellent mother, and his brother, who was as much extolled by the assembled company for his fraternal affection, as Calpurnius for his eloquence ; so striking was his concern during his brother's recital, and his joy at its reception.

May the gods grant me frequent occasions of giving you such tidings ! for I have at heart the interest of the present generation, and would fain see it not sterile and effete. And I ardently wish our young men of quality may possess other household trophies than ancestral images. As for those that stand in the house of these excellent youths, I now figure them to myself as silently applauding, exhorting, and (what is glory enough for the pair) owning them to be their kindred. Farewell.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

### XVIII

C. PLINIUS CALPURNIO MACRO SUO S.

BENE est mihi, quia tibi bene est. Habes uxorem tecum, habes filium; frueris mari, fontibus, viridibus, agro, villa amoenissima. Neque enim dubito esse amoenissimam, in qua se composuerat homo felicior, ante quam felicissimus fieret. Ego in Tuscis et venor et studeo, quae interdum alternis, interdum simul facio, nec tamen adhuc possum pronuntiare, utrum sit difficilius capere aliquid, an scribere. Vale.

### XIX

C. PLINIUS VALERIO<sup>1</sup> PAULINO SUO S.

VIDEO, quam molliter tuos habeas; quo simplicius tibi confitebor, qua indulgentia meos tractem. Est mihi semper in animo et Homericum illud πατήρ δ' ὡς ἥπιος ἦεν<sup>2</sup> et hoc nostrum "pater familiae." Quod si essem natura asperior et durior, frangeret me tamen infirmitas liberti mei Zosimi, cui tanto maior humanitas exhibenda est, quanto nunc illa magis eget. Homo

<sup>1</sup> VALERIO *ex Ricc. add. Müller.*

<sup>2</sup> *Od. ii. 47, 234.*

## BOOK V. xviii.—xix

### XVIII

#### TO CALPURNIUS MACER

ALL is well with me, since it is so with you. You have, I find, the company of your wife and-son; and the enjoyment of the sea, fountains, verdure, tilled fields, and a most delightful villa: for I doubt not the villa deserves that title, which was the chosen retreat of a man who was more happy before he attained the summit of happiness. As for myself, I am employed at my Tuscan villa in hunting and studying, sometimes alternately, and sometimes both together; but I am not yet able to pronounce whether game catching or writing is the more difficult pursuit. Farewell.

### XIX

#### TO VALERIUS PAULINUS

As I know how mildly you treat your own servants I the more frankly confess to you the indulgence I shew to mine. I have ever in my mind that line of Homer's:

“Like to a father's was his gentle sway,”  
and that expression in our own language, “father of a household.” But were I naturally of a rough and hardened temper, the ill state of health of my freed-man Zosimus (who has the stronger claim to humane treatment, as he now stands the more in need of it) would suffice to soften me. He is honest and well-

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

probus, officiosus, litteratus; et ars quidem eius et quasi inscriptio comoedus, in qua plurimum facit. Nam pronuntiat acriter, sapienter, apte, decenter etiam; utitur et cithara perite, ultra quam comoedo necesse est. Idem tam commode et orationes et historias et carmina legit, ut hoc solum didicisse videatur.

Haec tibi sedulo exposui, quo magis scires, quam multa unus mihi et quam iucunda ministeria praestaret. Accedit longa iam caritas hominis, quam ipsa pericula auxerunt. Est enim ita natura comparatum, ut nihil aequè amorem incitet et accendat quam carendi metus, quem ego pro hoc non semel patior. Nam ante aliquot annos, dum intente instanterque pronuntiat, sanguinem reiecit atque ob hoc in Aegyptum missus a me post longam peregrinationem confirmatus rediit nuper; deinde dum per continuos dies nimis imperat voci, veteris infirmitatis tussicula admonitus, rursus sanguinem reddidit.

Qua ex causa destinavi eum mittere in praedia tua, quae Foro Iuli possides. Audiavi enim te saepe referentem esse ibi et aëra salubrem et lac eiusmodi curationibus accommodatissimum. Rogo ergo, scribas tuis, ut illi villa, ut domus pateat, offerant etiam sumptibus eius si quid opus erit; erit autem opus modico. Est enim tam parcus et continens, ut non

## BOOK V. xix

educated ; but his profession, his *certified accomplishment*, one might say, is that of comedian, wherein he highly excels. He speaks with great emphasis, judgement, propriety, and some gracefulness ; and also plays the lyre more skilfully than a comedian need do. To this I must add, he reads history, oratory, and poetry, as well as if he had singly applied himself to that art.

I am particular in enumerating these qualifications to let you see how many and agreeable services I receive from this one man's hand. He is, besides, endeared to me by a long-standing affection, which is heightened by his present danger. For nature has so formed our hearts, that nothing contributes more to raise and inflame our love for any object than the apprehension of being deprived of it : a sentiment which Zosimus has given me occasion to experience more than once. For some years ago he strained himself so much by too vehement an exertion of his voice, that he spit blood, upon which account I sent him into Egypt ; from whence, after a long absence, he lately returned with great benefit to his health. But having again exerted his voice for several days together beyond his strength, he was reminded of his former malady by a slight return of his cough, and a spitting of blood.

For this reason I intend to send him to your farm at Forum Julii, having frequently heard you mention it as an exceeding fine air, and recommend the milk of that place as very good in disorders of this nature. I beg you would write directions to your people to admit him to your grounds and house, and to supply him with what he may have occasion for at his expense. He will not want much, for he is so

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

solum delicias, verum etiam necessitates valetudinis frugalitate restringat. Ego proficiscenti tantum viatici dabo, quantum sufficiat eunti in tua. Vale.

### XX

C. PLINIUS CORNELIO<sup>1</sup> URSO SUO S.

ITERUM Bithyni! breve tempus a Iulio Basso, et Rufum Varenum proconsule detulerunt, Varenum, quem nuper adversus Bassum advocatum et postularent et acceperant. Inducti in senatum, inquisitionem postulaverunt; tum Varenus petiit,<sup>2</sup> ut sibi quoque defensionis causa evocare testes liceret; recusantibus Bithynis, cognitio suscepta est.

Egi ego pro Vareno non sine eventu; nam, bene an male, liber indicabit. In actionibus enim utramque in partem fortuna dominatur; multum commendationis et detrahit et affert memoria, vox, gestus, tempus ipsum, postremo vel amor vel odium rei; liber offensis, liber gratia, liber et secundis casibus et adversis caret. Respondit mihi Fonteius Magnus, unus ex Bithynis, plurimis verbis, paucissimis rebus.

<sup>1</sup> CORNELIO *ex Ricc. add. Müller.*

<sup>2</sup> petiit *Bipons, K*, petit *MD pra.*



## BOOK V. xix.-xx

thrifty and temperate as not only to abstain from delicacies, but even to deny himself the necessities his ill state of health requires. I shall furnish him when he sets out with sufficient journey money to take him to your house. Farewell.

### XX

#### TO CORNELIUS URSUS

THE Bithynians again! Soon after they had gone through with their prosecution of Julius Bassus, they also impeached their late Governor, Rufus Varenus; who was but just before (and that too at their own request) appointed counsel for them against Bassus. Being introduced into the Senate, they petitioned for an inquiry. Varenus, on the other hand, begged all proceedings might be stayed till he could send for the witnesses necessary to his defence; but this being opposed by the Bithynians, that point was debated.

I was counsel (and no unsuccessful one) for Varenus; but whether a good one or not, you will judge when you read my speech. Fortune has a very considerable share in the event of every speech in court; the memory, the voice, the gestures of the advocate, even the occasion itself; lastly popular sentiment, as it is either favourable or adverse to the accused, all conspire to influence the success. But a speech read in the closet, is without fear or favour, and has nothing to fear or hope from lucky or unlucky accidents. Fonteius Magnus, one of the Bithynians, replied to me with great flow of words, and little to the purpose. It is the fault of most

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Est plerisque Graecorum ut illi pro copia volubilitas ; tam longas tamque frigidas periodos uno spiritu quasi torrente contorquent. Itaque Iulius Candidus non invenuste solet dicere aliud esse eloquentiam, aliud loquentiam. Nam eloquentia vix uni aut alteri, immo, si Marco Antonio credimus, nemini ; haec vero, quam Candidus loquentiam appellat, multis atque etiam impudentissimo cuique maxime contigit.

Postero die dixit pro Vareno Homullus calide, acriter, culte ; contra Nigrinus presse, graviter, ornate. Censuit Acilius Rufus, consul designatus, inquisitionem Bithynis dandam, postulationem Varenii silentio praeteriit. Haec forma negandi fuit. Cornelius Priscus consularis et accusatoribus, quae petebant, et reo tribuit vicitque numero. Impetravimus rem nec lege comprehensam nec satis usitatam iustam tamen. Quare iustam, non sum epistula exsecuturus, ut desideres actionem. Nam, si verum est Homericum illud :

*τὴν γὰρ αἰοιδὴν μᾶλλον ἐπικλείουσ' ἄνθρωποι,  
ἢ τις ἀκούοντεςσι νεωτάτῃ ἀμφιπέληται,<sup>1</sup>*

providendum est mihi, ne gratiam novitatis et florem, quae oratiunculam illam vel maxime commendat, epistolae loquacitate praecerpam. Vale.

<sup>1</sup> *Od.* i. 351.

## BOOK V. xx

Greek orators, as well as of himself, that they mistake volubility for copiousness, and thus overwhelm you with an endless torrent of cold and unaffecting periods. Julius Candidus used, rather neatly, to say, that "eloquence is one thing and loquacity another." Eloquence indeed is the privilege of very few; nay, if we will believe Marcus Antonius<sup>a</sup> of none: but that faculty which Candidus calls *loquacity*, is common to numbers, and generally possessed to perfection by the most impudent.

The next day Homullus spoke for Varenus with great art, strength, and elegance; to whom Nigrinus made a very close, solid, and graceful reply. Acilius Rufus, the consul-elect, moved that the Bithynians should be granted an inquiry; but he took no notice of the petition of Varenus; which was only another way of negativing it. Cornelius Priscus, a consular, proposed to grant both petitions, and his motion was carried by a majority. Thus we gained a concession not warranted by either law or precedent, but none the less equitable. But why equitable, I will not expound in this letter, that you may with more impatience turn to my speech. For if it is true, as Homer sings, that

" . . . Novel lays attract our ravish'd ears;  
But old, the mind with inattention hears:"

I must not suffer the loquacity of my letter to despoil my speech of its principal flower, by robbing it of that novelty which is indeed its chief recommendation. Farewell.

<sup>a</sup> The famous orator. He flourished just before Cicero, who calls him the most eloquent speaker he ever heard.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

### XXI

C. PLINIUS POMPEIO <sup>1</sup> SATURNINO SUO S.

VARIE me adfecerunt litterae tuae ; nam partim laeta, partim tristia continebant, laeta, quod te in urbe teneri nuntiabant (‘nollem,’ inquis ; sed ego volo) praeterea quod recitaturum, statim ut venissem, pollicebantur. Ago gratias, quod exspector. Triste illud, quod Iulius Valens graviter iacet ; quamquam ne hoc quidem triste, si illius utilitatibus aestimetur, cuius interest quam maturissime inexplicabili morbo liberari. Illud plane non triste solum, verum etiam luctuosum, quod Iulius Avitus decessit, dum ex quaestura redit, decessit in nave, procul a fratre amantissimo, procul a matre, a sororibus. Nihil ista ad mortuum pertinent, sed pertinuerunt cum moreretur, pertinent ad hos, qui supersunt, iam, quod in flore primo tantae indolis iuvenis extinctus est summa consecuturus, si, virtutes eius maturuissent.

Quo ille studiorum amore flagrabat ! quantum legit ! quantum etiam scripsit ! quae nunc omnia

<sup>1</sup> POMPEIO *add. Müller ex Ricc.*

## XXI

## TO POMPEIUS SATURNINUS

YOUR letter affected me diversely, as it contained matter both for joy and sorrow. It rejoiced me by announcing that you are detained in Rome ("against my will," I hear you say ; not against mine, however), and again by promising that you will give your recital as soon as I arrive, and I return you my best thanks for postponing it on my account. But it grieved me by reporting the dangerous state of Julius Valens ; though indeed one cannot grieve at that if one regards it with reference to his own good, since the sooner he is released from an incurable disease, the better for him. But what you add concerning Avitus, that he died in his return from the province where he had been Quaestor, is news, not only sad, but deplorable. That he died on board ship, at a distance from his fondly attached brother, and from his mother and sisters, are circumstances which though they cannot affect him now he is no more, yet undoubtedly did so in his last moments, and still affect those he has left behind. It adds poignancy to our grief that a young man of his shining talents should be cut off in his early prime, and snatched from those high honours to which his virtues, had they been permitted to grow to their full maturity, would certainly have raised him.

How did his bosom glow with the love of learning ! How many books did he peruse ! nay, how many did he compose ! But his labours are now perished with

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

cum ipso sine fructu posteritatis abierunt. Sed quid ego indulgeo dolori? cui si frenos remittas, nulla materia non maxima est. Finem epistolae faciam, ut facere possim etiam lacrimis, quas epistula expressit. Vale.

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## BOOK V. xxi

him, and for ever lost to posterity. Yet why indulge my sorrow? A passion which, if we once give a loose to it, will aggravate every the slightest circumstance. I will put an end therefore to my letter, that I may to the tears which yours has drawn from me. Farewell.





## BOOK VI

## LIBER SEXTUS

### I

C. PLINIUS TIRONI SUO S.

QUAMDIU ego trans Padum, tu in Piceno, minus te requirebam ; postquam ego in urbe, tu adhuc in Piceno, multo magis, seu quod ipsa loca, in quibus esse una solemus, acrius me tui commonent, seu quod desiderium absentium nihil perinde ac vicinitas acuit, quoque propius accesseris ad spem fruendi, hoc impatientius careas. Quidquid in causa, eripe me huic tormento ; veni, aut ego illuc, unde inconsulte properavi, revertar vel ob hoc solum, ut experiar, an mihi, cum sine me Romae coeperis esse, similes his epistulas mittas. Vale.

### II

C. PLINIUS ARRIANO SUO S.

SOLEO non numquam in iudiciis quaerere Marcum Regulum ; nolo enim dicere desiderare. Cur ergo quaero ? Habebat studiis honorem, timebat, pallebat,

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## BOOK VI

### I

#### TO TIRO

I WAS less sensible of your absence while you were in the country of the Piceni, and I on the other side the Po, than I find myself now that I am returned to Rome. Whether it be that the scene, where we used to associate, itself excites a more passionate remembrance of you ; or that we never miss absent friends so keenly as when they are only a short way off, (our desires for a favourite object rising in proportion to our nearer approach towards it,) I know not. But whatever the cause may be, put an end to the torment it gives me, I entreat you, by hastening hither : otherwise I shall return again into the country (whence I unadvisedly hurried), merely to learn by experiment whether, when you have tried doing without me at Rome, you will send a letter like this. Farewell.

### II

#### TO ARRIANUS

I WILL not say I regret the loss of Regulus, but I confess, I sometimes miss him at the bar. The man, it must be owned, had a reverence for his profession ; he would grow anxious and pale over his causes, and

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

scribebat, quamvis non posset dediscere. Illud ipsum, quod oculum modo dextrum, modo sinistrum circumlinebat, dextrum, si a petitore, alterum, si a possessore esset acturus ; quod candidum splenium in hoc aut in illud supercilium transferebat ; quod semper haruspices consulebat de actionis eventu, anili superstitione ; sed tamen et a magno studiorum honore veniebat. Iam illa perquam iucunda una dicentibus, quod libera tempora petebat, quod audituros corrogabat. Quid enim iucundius quam sub alterius invidia, quamdiu velis, et in alieno auditorio quasi deprehensum commode dicere ?

Sed utcunque se habent ista, bene fecit Regulus, quod est mortuus, melius, si ante. Nunc enim sane poterat sine malo publico vivere sub eo principe, sub quo nocere non poterat. Ideo fas est non numquam eum quaerere. Nam postquam obiit ille, increbuit passim et invaluit consuetudo binas vel singulas clepsydras, interdum etiam dimidias et dandi et petendi. Nam, et qui dicunt, egisse malunt quam agere, et qui audiunt, finire quam iudicare. Tanta negligentia, tanta desidia, tanta denique irreverentia studiorum periculorumque est. An nos sapientiores maioribus nostris, nos legibus ipsis iustiores, quae tot

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<sup>a</sup> This silly piece of superstition seems to have been peculiar to Regulus. (Melm.)

used to prepare his speeches in writing, though he could not commit them to memory. Even his trick of painting his right or left eye,<sup>a</sup> and wearing a white patch over one side or the other of his forehead, as he was counsel either for the plaintiff or defendant ; even his custom of always consulting the soothsayers upon the event of every plea through the effect of immoderate superstition, arose also from his veneration for eloquence. And what made it extremely pleasant to appear in the same cause with him, he always claimed unrestricted time, and never failed to procure an audience. For what can be pleasanter than to speak as long as you choose, knowing that the other side will bear the blame of your prolixity ; and moreover to speak excellently, as if taken unawares, before an audience collected to hear not you, but another.

But for all that, Regulus did well to die, though he would have done still better had he died sooner ; since he might now be alive without any danger to the public in the reign of a prince under whom he could do no mischief. I need not scruple therefore to say I sometimes miss him : for since his death, the custom has grown widely prevalent of not allowing, nor indeed asking, more than an hour or two to plead in, and sometimes not half that time. The truth is, our advocates are better pleased to have got through a cause, than to be engaged in it ; and our judges are more bent on concluding, than on deciding it. Such is their negligence, their sloth, nay, disrespect for both the profession and the grave issues of the Law. But are we wiser than our ancestors ? are we more equitable than the laws themselves, which grant so many hours and days,

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

horas, tot dies, tot comperendinationes largiuntur? hebetes illi et supra modum tardi, nos apertius dicimus, celerius intellegimus, religiosius iudicamus, quia paucioribus clepsydris praecipitamus causas, quam diebus explicari solebant? O Regule, qui ambitione ab omnibus obtinebas, quod fidei paucissimi praestant!

Equidem quoties iudico, quod vel saepius facio, quam dico, quantum quis plurimum postulat aquae, do. Etenim temerarium existimo divinare, quam spatiosa sit causa inaudita, tempusque negotio finire, cuius modum ignores, praesertim cum primam religioni suae iudex patientiam debeat, quae pars magna iustitiae est. At quaedam supervacua dicuntur. Etiam; sed satius est et haec dici, quam non dici necessaria. Praeterea, an sint supervacua, nisi cum audieris, scire non possis. Sed de his melius coram ut de pluribus vitiis civitatis. Nam tu quoque amore communium<sup>1</sup> soles emendari cupere, quae iam corrigere difficile est.

Nunc respiciamus domos nostras. Ecquid omnia in tua recte? in mea novi nihil. Mihi autem et gratiora sunt bona, quod perseverant; et leviora incommoda, quod assuevi. Vale.

<sup>1</sup> amore communium *M, K, Müller (cum cruce), communi omnium coni. Mommsen, communium morum, Gierig.*

## BOOK VI. ii

and adjournments to a cause? Were our forefathers stupid, and dull beyond measure? And are we more clear in speech, more quick in our apprehension, or more scrupulous in our decisions, because we hurry over our causes in fewer hours than they took days to unravel them? To think, O Regulus, that no jury could refuse to thy self-aggrandisement, what very few now concede to professional honour!<sup>a</sup>

As for myself whenever I serve as juror (which is oftener than I appear at the bar) I always give the advocates as much time<sup>b</sup> as ever they ask. For I look upon it as highly presuming to divine before a cause is heard what time it will require, and to set limits to an affair before one is acquainted with its extent; especially as the first and most sacred duty of a juror is patience, which is a very considerable part of justice. But, it is objected, advocates say much that is superfluous. Granted: but better so, than that they should leave unsaid what is necessary. Besides, you cannot tell whether an argument be superfluous till you have heard it. But this, and many other public abuses, will be better discussed face to face. For like myself, as a lover of the commonwealth, you are always desirous of reforms, even where they have now become difficult.

But to turn to our domestic concerns; I hope all goes well in your home; everything is as usual in mine. The good which I enjoy grows more acceptable to me by its continuance; as habit renders me less sensible of my discomforts. Farewell.

<sup>a</sup> *fides* is here the duty of an advocate to his client, which might oblige him to ask a liberal time-allowance.

<sup>b</sup> Literally "water," i.e. of the clepsydra.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

### III

C. PLINIUS VERO SUO S.

GRATIAS ago, quod agellum, quem nutrici meae donaveram, colendum suscepisti. Erat, cum donarem, centum milium nummum, postea, decrescente reditu etiam pretium minuit, quod nunc te curante reparabit. Tu modo memineris commendari tibi a me non arbores et terram, quamquam haec quoque, sed munusculum meum; quod esse quam fructuosissimum non illius magis interest, quae accepit, quam mea, qui dedi. Vale.

### IV

C. PLINIUS CALPURNIAE SUAE S.

NUMQUAM sum magis de occupationibus meis questus, quae me non sunt passae aut proficiscentem te valetudinis causa in Campaniam prosequi, aut profectam e vestigio subsequi. Nunc enim praecipue simul esse cupiebam, ut oculis meis crederem, quid viribus, quid corpusculo apparares, ecquid denique secessus voluptates regionisque abundantiam inoffensa transmitteres. Equidem etiam fortem te non sine cura desiderarem; est enim suspensum et anxium de eo, quem ardentissime diligas, interdum nihil scire;

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## BOOK VI. iii.-iv

### III

#### TO VERUS

I AM much obliged to you for undertaking the care of that little farm I gave to my nurse. It was worth, when I made her a present of it, an hundred thousand sesterces, but the returns having since diminished, it has sunk in its value : however, that will rise again, I doubt not, under your management. But, remember, what I recommend to your attention is not the fruit-trees and the land (which yet I by no means except), but my little benefaction ; for it is not more the good woman's concern as a recipient, than mine as the donor, that it should be as profitable as possible. Farewell.

### IV

#### TO CALPURNIA, HIS WIFE

I NEVER complained more of my business than when it prevented me not only from escorting you on your journey, but following you at once, when ill health took you into Campania. For at this time especially I wished to be with you, so as to see for myself what improvement there is in your strength and that dear little person of yours, and whether the amusements of that retreat, and the plenty of that district agree with you. Were you in sound health, yet I could not feel easy in your absence ; for there is harassing suspense in being every now and then wholly ignorant of what is happening to a most dearly loved one ; but now your sickness conspires

## THE LETTERS OF PLIN<sup>1</sup>

nunc vero me cum absentiae tum infirmitatis tuae ratio incerta et varia sollicitudine exterret. Vereor omnia, imaginor omnia, quaeque natura metuentium est, ea maxime mihi, quae maxime abominor, fingo. Quo impensius rogo, ut timori meo quotidie singulis vel etiam binis epistulis consulas. Ero enim securior, dum lego, statimque timebo, cum legero. Vale.

### V

C. PLINIUS URSO SUO S.

SCRIPSERAM tenuisse Varenum, ut sibi evocare testes liceret; quod pluribus aequum, quibusdam iniquum et quidem pertinaciter visum, maxime Licinio Nepoti, qui sequenti senatu, cum de rebus aliis referretur, de proximo senatus consulto disseruit finitamque causam retractavit. Addidit etiam petendum a consulibus, ut referrent sub exemplo legis ambitus de lege repetundarum, an placeret in futurum ad eam legem adici, ut, sicut accusatoribus inquirendi testibusque denuntiandi potestas ex ea lege esset, ita reis quoque fieret.

Fuerunt, quibus haec eius oratio ut sera et in-tempestiva et praepostera displiceret, quae omisso

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<sup>a</sup> v. 20.

## BOOK VI. iv.-v

with your absence to affright me with a thousand vague disquietudes. I fear and imagine every possible calamity and, as is the way of frightened people, my fancy paints most vividly just those that I most earnestly implore Heaven to avert. Let me conjure you then to pay regard to my anxiety by writing to me every day, and even twice a day. I shall be more easy, at least while I am reading your letters; and all my fears will return the moment I have perused them. Farewell.

### V

#### To URSUS

I ACQUAINTED you in a former letter,<sup>a</sup> that Varenus obtained leave to summon his witnesses. This was judged equitable by the majority.(of the Senate) though some maintained even pertinaciously that it was the reverse: particularly Licinius Nepos, who at the next session of the Senate, when other business was before the house, spoke on their last decree and re-opened a case that had been decided. And he went on to propose that the consuls be desired to take the sense of the house upon the question whether following the precedent afforded by the law concerning bribery and corruption, a clause should be added to the law concerning extortion, granting defendants the same right to seek evidence and summon witnesses as plaintiffs enjoyed under that statute.

Some heard this speech with displeasure, regarding it as too late, ill-timed and out of place; Nepos they said, had let slip the proper occasion of opposing

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

contradicendi tempore castigaret peractum, cui potuisset occurrere. Iuventius quidem Celsus praetor tamquam emendatorem senatus et multis et vehementer increpuit. Respondit Nepos rursusque Celsus; neuter contumeliis temperavit. Nolo referre, quae dici ab ipsis moleste tuli. Quo magis quosdam e numero nostro improbavi, qui modo ad Celsum, modo ad Nepotem, prout hic vel ille diceret, cupiditate audiendi cursitabant et nunc, quasi stimulant et accenderent, nunc, quasi reconciliarent componerentque,<sup>1</sup> frequentius singulis, ambobus interdum propitium Caesarem ut in ludicro aliquo precabantur.

Mihi quidem illud etiam peracerbum fuit, quod sunt alter alteri, quid pararent, indicati. Nam et Celsus Nepoti ex libello respondit et Celso Nepos ex pugillaribus. Tanta loquacitas amicorum, ut homines iurgaturi id ipsum invicem scirent,<sup>2</sup> tamquam convenissent. Vale.

## VI

C. PLINIUS FUNDANO SUO S.

Si quando, nunc praecipue cuperem esse te Romae, et sis rogo. Opus est mihi voti, laboris, sollicitudinis socio. Petit honores Iulius Naso, petit cum multis,

<sup>1</sup> reconc. componerentque *Dpra*, *Bipons*, *Otto*, reconc. ac recomponerent *K*. <sup>2</sup> scirent *Dpa*, *Bipons*, *Otto*, scierint *K*.

## BOOK VI. v.-vi

the decree, and castigated a decision after it was made, which he might have nipped in the bud. Juventius Celsus, the Praetor, reproached him warmly and at length with setting up for a reformer of the Senate. Nepos replied; Celsus spoke again; and neither was sparing of abuse. I forbear to repeat what I could not hear from their own lips, without annoyance. So much the more I disapprove the conduct of certain Senators who ran, now to Nepos, now to Celsus, as one or the other was speaking, greedy to hear their mutual invectives; and as if now stimulating and inflaming the combatants, and then again reconciling and appeasing them, kept begging the Emperor to favour one or the other, and occasionally both, just as they might do at some public show.

To me, at least, it was also most bitter to observe that each party had been informed of what the other intended to allege; for Celsus replied to Nepos out of a paper, as Nepos did to Celsus out of a note-book, which each held in his hand. Thanks to the chatter of their friends, each knew exactly how the other would abuse him, just as if they had previously agreed to quarrel. Farewell.

## VI

### TO FUNDANUS

I NEVER wished to see you in Rome more than I do at this time, and I entreat you therefore to come hither; for I need a partner in my prayers, toils, and solicitude. Julius Naso is a candidate for office: his competitors are numerous and worthy, so that to

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

cum bonis, quos ut gloriosum sic est difficile superare. Pendeo ergo, et exerceor spe, adficio metu et me consularem esse non sentio; nam rursus mihi videor omnium, quae decurri, candidatus. Meretur hanc curam longa mei caritate. Est mihi cum illo non sane paterna amicitia (neque enim esse potuit per meam aetatem), solebat tamen vixdum adulescentulo mihi pater eius cum magna laude monstrari.

Erat non studiorum tantum, verum etiam studiosorum amantissimus ac prope cotidie ad audiendos, quos tunc ego frequentabam, Quintilianum et Niceten Sacerdotem ventitabat, vir alioqui clarus et gravis, et qui prodesse filio memoria sui debeat. Sed multi nunc in senatu, quibus ignotus ille; multi, quibus notus, sed non nisi viventes reverentur. Quo magis huic omissa gloria patris, in qua magnum ornamentum, gratia infirma, ipsi enitendum, ipsi laborandum est.

Quod quidem semper, quasi provideret hoc tempus, sedulo fecit; paravit amicos, quos paraverat, coluit, me certe, ut primum sibi iudicare permisit, ad amorem imitationemque delegit. Dicenti mihi sollicitus adsistit, adsidet recitanti; primus<sup>1</sup> etiam et cum maxime nascentibus opusculis meis interest nunc solus, ante cum fratre, cuius nuper amissi ego

<sup>1</sup> primus *Dpra*, *Bipons*, *Müller*, primis *M*, *K*.

overcome them is no less difficult than glorious. I am distracted by suspense, and so great is my anxiety that I forget I have passed the consulship, and fancy I am to stand over again for all the offices I have held. This concern is justly due to Naso, in return for his long affection to me. Our friendship is not, it is true, hereditary, for I was too much his father's junior to admit of any intimacy between us; yet from my earliest youth I was taught to look upon him with veneration.

He was a devoted admirer not only of oratory, but of those who cultivated it; and went almost daily to the lectures of Quintilian and Nicetes, which I was then attending. He was, in short, a man of worth and eminence, and one whose memory ought to facilitate the career of his son. But there are numbers now in the Senate who never knew that excellent person; and though there are many also who did, yet they are such whose regards extend not beyond the living. So that Nepos must not rely upon his father's fame (which though it handsomely adorns, can but feebly recommend him), but solely on his own strenuous exertions.

In those, indeed, he has ever been as unremitting as if he had foreseen the present contingency. He has acquired friends and cultivated their friendship, and particularly singled *me* out as the object of his esteem and imitation, the moment he began to judge for himself. Whenever I plead in court, whenever I give a recital, he is sedulous to attend; as he ever shows the first and liveliest interest when some little work of mine sees the light. His brother showed the same attachment to me. But he has lost that excellent brother! and it shall be my part to supply

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

suscipere partes, ego vicem debeo implere. Doleo enim et illum immatura morte indignissime raptum et hunc optimi fratris adiumento destitutum solisque amicis relictum.

Quibus ex causis exigo, ut venias et suffragio meo tuum iungas. Permultum interest mea te ostentare, tecum circumire. Ea est auctoritas tua, ut putem me efficacius tecum etiam meos amicos rogaturum. Abrumpe, si qua te retinent ; hoc tempus meum, hoc fides, hoc etiam dignitas postulat. Suscepi candidatum, et suscepisse me notum est ; ego ambio, ego periclitor ; in summam, si datur Nasoni, quod petit, illius honor, si negatur, mea repulsa est. Vale.

### VII

#### C. PLINIUS CALPURNIAE SUAE S.

SCRIBIS te absentia mea non mediocriter adfici unumque habere solacium, quod pro me libellos meos teneas, saepe etiam in vestigio meo colloces. Gratum est, quod nos requiris, quod his fomentis adquiescis. Invicem ego epistulas tuas lectito atque identidem in manus quasi novas sumo ; sed eo magis ad desiderium

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## BOOK VI. vi.-vii

his place. It is with grief I reflect upon the immature death of the one, as I lament that the other should be deprived of the assistance of so valuable a relation, and left only to the zeal of his friends.

It is on these grounds I make a point of your coming hither and uniting your support with mine. It will be much to my advantage to exhibit you as assisting me, and canvass in your company: for such is your credit and influence, that I am persuaded your presence will render my applications more effectual even with my own friends. Let me entreat you then to break through all obstacles that may lie in your way; my situation, my loyalty and my credit, all require it. I have undertaken to support the interest of Naso, and the world knows that I do; the pursuit and the hazard therefore is become my own. In a word, if he obtains this post, the honour will be his; but if he be rejected, the repulse will be mine. Farewell.

## VII

### TO CALPURNIA

You tell me, my absence is greatly uneasy to you, and that your only consolation is in conversing with my works, instead of their author, to which you frequently even give my own place by your side. How agreeable is it to me to know that you thus wish for my company, and support yourself under the want of it by these tender amusements! In return, I read over your letters again and again, and am continually taking them up as if I had just received them; but alas! they only serve to make

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

tui accendor. Nam, cuius litterae tantum habent suavitatis, huius sermonibus quantum dulcedinis inest ! Tu tamen frequentissime scribe, licet hoc ita me delectet, ut torqueat. Vale.

### VIII

C. PLINIUS PRISCO SUO S.

ATILIIUM CRESCENTEM et nosti et amas. Quis enim illum spectatior paulo aut non novit aut non amat ? Hunc ego non ut multi, sed artissime diligo. Oppida nostra unius diei itinere dirimuntur ; ipsi amare invicem, qui est flagrantissimus amor, adulescentuli coepimus. Mansit hic postea nec refrixit iudicio, sed invaluit. Sciunt, qui alterutrum nostrum familiarius intuentur. Nam et ille amicitiam meam latissima praedicatione circumfert, et ego prae me fero, quam sit mihi curae modestia, quies, securitas eius. Quin etiam, cum insolentiam cuiusdam tribunatum plebis inituri vereretur idque indicasset mihi, respondi :

Οὐτίς ἐμὲν ζῶντος.<sup>1</sup>

Quorsus haec ? ut scias non posse Atilium me incolumi iniuriam accipere. Iterum dices : “ Quorsus haec ? ” Debit ei pecuniam Valerius Varus.

<sup>1</sup> Hom. *Il.* i. 88.

## BOOK VI. vii.-viii

me more strongly regret your absence : for how amiable must her conversation be, whose letters have so many charms? Let me receive them, however, as often as possible, notwithstanding there is still a mixture of pain in the pleasure they afford me. Farewell.

### VIII

#### TO PRISCUS

You know and esteem Atilius Crescens ; as indeed what person of any distinction does not ? My own attachment to him is much closer than the common run of his numerous friendships. Our native towns are separated only by a day's journey ; and we became friends in early youth, a season when friendship is most ardent. Ours survived that period ; and so far from being weakened, was confirmed by our riper judgements, as those who know us best can witness. For he takes pleasure in boasting every where of my friendship ; as I do to let the world know that his honour, ease, and safety are my peculiar concern. Insomuch that upon his expressing to me some apprehension from the insolence of a certain person who was entering upon the tribuneship of the people, I could not forbear answering,

“ Long as Achilles breathes this vital air,  
To touch thy head no impious hand shall dare.”

“ Whither tends all this ? ” you say. To shew you that I look upon every injury offered to Atilius as done to myself. But again you will ask my drift. You must know, then, Valerius Varus at his death,

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Huius est heres Maximus noster, quem et ipse amo, sed coniunctius tu. Rogo ergo, exigo etiam pro iure amicitiae, cures, ut Atilio meo salva sit non sors modo, verum etiam usura plurium annorum. Homo est alieni abstinentissimus, sui diligens, nullis quaestibus sustinetur, nullus illi nisi ex frugalitate redditus. Nam studia, quibus plurimum praestat, ad voluptatem tantum et gloriam exercet. Gravis est ei vel minima iactura, quia reparare, quod amiserit,<sup>1</sup> gravius est. Exime hunc illi, exime hunc mihi scrupulum; sine me suavitate eius, sine leporibus perfrui. Neque enim possum tristem videre, cuius hilaritas me tristem esse non patitur.

In summa nosti facetias hominis; quas velim attendas ne in bilem et amaritudinem vertat iniuria. Quam vim habeat offensus, crede ei, quam in amore habet. Non feret magnum et liberum ingenium cum contumelia damnum. Verum, ut ferat ille, ego meum damnum, meam contumeliam vindicabo; sed non tamquam pro mea, hoc est, gravius, irascar. Quamquam quid denuntiationibus et quasi minis ago? Quin potius, ut coeperam, rogo, oro, des operam, ne ille se, quod validissime vereor, a me, ego me

<sup>1</sup> amiserit *Dpr*, amiseris *Ma*.

owed Atilius a sum of money. Though I am on good terms with Maximus, his heir, yet there is a closer regard between him and you. I ask therefore, nay, demand in Friendship's name, that you will take care my dear Atilius gets back not only the principal of his loan, but several years' arrears of interest. He neither covets the property of others, nor neglects the care of his own; and as he is not engaged in any lucrative profession, he has nothing to depend upon but his frugality; for as to oratory, in which he greatly excels, he pursues it merely upon the motives of pleasure and fame. In such a situation the slightest loss presses hard upon a man, since he cannot easily repair it. Relieve us both, then, I entreat you, of this difficulty, and suffer me still to enjoy his amiable and diverting conversation; for I cannot bear to see that gaiety of his overclouded, which dissipates every gloom of melancholy in myself.

In a word, as you are well acquainted with Atilius' sportive temper, I hope you will look to it that no injury shall discompose and sour it. You may judge by the warmth of his affection how bitter his resentments would prove; for a generous and great mind can ill brook a loss when it is joined with an affront. But though he should pass it over, I shall avenge it as my own loss, and an affront offered to myself; as for resenting it, however, that I shall do as if another were the injured party; that is, with double warmth. But, after all, why this air of threatening? rather let me end in the same style I began, by earnestly conjuring you to use your endeavours, that neither Atilius may think me remiss towards him (which I strongly deprecate), nor I

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

neglectum a te putem. Dabis autem, si hoc perinde curae est tibi quam illud mihi. Vale.

### IX

C. PLINIUS TACITO SUO S.

COMMENDAS mihi Iulium Nasonem candidatum. Nasonem mihi? quid si me ipsum? Fero tamen et ignosco. Eundem enim commendassem tibi, si te Romae morante ipse afuissem. Habet hoc sollicitudo, quod omnia necessaria putat. Tu tamen censeo alios roges; ego precum tuarum minister, adiutor, particeps ero. Vale.

### X

C. PLINIUS ALBINO SUO S.

CUM venissem in socrus meae villam Alsiensem, quae aliquando Rufi Vergini fuit, ipse mihi locus optimi illius et maximi viri desiderium non sine dolore renovavit. Hunc enim incolere secessum atque etiam senectutis suae nidulum vocare consueverat. Quocunque me contulissem, illum animus, illum oculi requirebant. Libuit etiam monimentum eius videre, et vidisse paenituit. Est enim adhuc imperfectum, nec difficultas operis in causa modici ac

## BOOK VI. viii.-x

entertain similar thoughts of yourself; and undoubtedly you will, if your solicitude on the latter point equals mine on the former. Farewell.

### IX

#### TO TACITUS

WHEN you commend to my interest the candidature of Julius Naso, what is it but commending me to myself? However, I forgive you, for I should have done the same thing, had you been at Rome and I absent. The tender anxiety of friendship is apt to imagine every circumstance to be material. But I advise you to turn your solicitations to others; my own part shall be deputy, assistant, and associate in your canvass. Farewell.

### X

#### TO ALBINUS

I WAS lately at Alsium, where my wife's mother has a villa which once belonged to Verginius Rufus.<sup>a</sup> The place renewed even painfully my regrets for that great and excellent man. He was extremely fond of this retreat, and used to call it "the nest of his old age." Wherever I turned, my heart, my eyes, ached to behold my vanished friend. I even had an inclination to view his monument; but I repented the visit, for I found it still unfinished, and this not from any difficulty in erecting a work of such modest, indeed, small dimensions, but through

<sup>a</sup> See ii. 1, ix. 19.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

potius exigui, sed inertia eius, cui cura mandata est. Subit indignatio cum miseratione post decimum mortis annum reliquias neglectumque cinerem sine titulo, sine nomine iacere, cuius memoria orbem terrarum gloria pervagetur. At ille mandaverat caveratque, ut divinum illud et immortale factum versibus inscriberetur :

Hic situs est Rufus, pulso qui Vindice quondam  
Imperium asseruit non sibi, sed patriae.

Tam rara in amicitiiis fides, tam parata oblivio mortuorum, ut ipsi nobis debeamus etiam conditoria extruere omniaque heredum officia praesumere. Nam cui non est verendum, quod videmus accidisse Verginio? cuius iniuriam ut indigniorem sic etiam notiozem ipsius claritas facit. Vale.

### XI

C. PLINIUS MAXIMO SUO S.

O DIEM laetum ! adhibitus in consilium a praefecto urbis audiavi ex diverso agentes summae spei, summae indolis iuvenes duos, Fuscum Salinatorem et Numidium Quadratum, egregium par nec modo temporibus nostris, sed litteris ipsis ornamento futurum. Mira

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<sup>a</sup> *i.e.* the heir of Verginius, who neglected the injunctions as to this monument in the latter's will.

<sup>b</sup> After the battle in which he defeated Julius Vindex, who



## BOOK VI. x.-xi

the neglect of him to whose charge it was committed.<sup>a</sup> I could not see without a concern mixed with indignation, the remains of a man, whose fame filled the whole world, lie for ten years after his death without an inscription, or a name. Yet he had directed that the divine and immortal action of his life should be recorded upon his tomb in the following lines :

“ Here Rufus lies, who raised in victory’s hour  
His country, not himself, to sovran power.” <sup>b</sup>

But a faithful friend is so rare to be found, and the dead are so soon forgotten, that we shall be obliged to build even our very tombs, and anticipate every office of our heirs. For what man can feel himself secure from undergoing the same fate as Verginius, whose shining worth makes the wrong to his memory the more cruel, and the more conspicuous? Farewell.

## XI

### TO MAXIMUS

How happy a day did I lately pass! when having been called by the Urban Praefect to his advisory council, I heard two young men of the highest promise and talents, Fuscus Salinator and Numidius Quadratus, plead on the opposite sides; a noble pair who will one day prove an ornament not only to the present age, but to literature itself. They had raised a great revolt in Gallia Lugdunensis, Verginius was urged by his soldiers to proclaim himself Emperor, but refused (69 A. D.).

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

utrique probitas constantia salva, decorus habitus, os Latinum, vox virilis, tenax memoria, magnum ingenium, iudicium aequale; quae singula mihi voluptati fuerunt atque inter haec illud, quod et ipsi me ut rectorem, ut magistrum intuebantur, et iis, qui audiebant, me aemulari, meis instare vestigiis videbantur.

O diem (repetam enim) laetum notandumque mihi candidissimo calculo! Quid enim aut publice laetius quam clarissimos iuvenes nomen et famam ex studiis petere aut mihi optatius quam me ad recta tendentibus quasi exemplar esse propositum? Quod gaudium ut perpetuo capiam, deos oro; ab iisdem teste te peto, ut omnes, qui me imitari tanti putabunt, meliores esse quam me velint. Vale.

## XII

C. PLINIUS FABATO PROSOCERO SUO S.

Tu vero non debes suspensa manu commendare mihi, quos tuendos putas. Nam et te decet multis prodesse et me suscipere, quidquid ad curam tuam

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## BOOK VI. xi.-xii

covered upon this occasion an admirable probity, supported by inflexible courage : their deportment was decent, their language pure Latin, their voice manly, their memory strong, their genius elevated, and guided by an equal solidity of judgement. I was gratified by their display of these several excellencies, and, by the incidental circumstance that, while the speakers themselves kept their eyes fixed upon me, as on their guide and master, the audience considered their oratory as emulating and copying my own.

It was a day (I cannot but repeat it again) of exquisite happiness, which I shall ever distinguish with the fairest mark. For what indeed could be either more pleasing to me on the public account, than to observe two such noble youths building their fame and glory upon eloquence ; or more desirable upon my own, than to be as it were held up as a pattern to them in their pursuit of virtue ? may the gods vouchsafe me lasting enjoyment of that satisfaction ! And you will bear me witness, I sincerely pray, that every man who thinks me deserving of his imitation, may far excel the pattern he has chosen. Farewell.

## XII

### TO FABATUS, HIS WIFE'S GRANDFATHER

MOST certainly you should not be chary of recommending to me such persons as you think deserving of patronage ; for extensive beneficence is as much your natural part, as mine is to take up

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

pertinet. Itaque Vettio Prisco, quantum plurimum potuero, praestabo, praesertim in arena mea, hoc est apud centumviros.

Epistularum, quas mihi, ut ais, aperto pectore scripsisti, oblivisci me iubes. At ego nullarum libentius memini. Ex illis enim vel praecipue sentio, quanto opere me diligas, cum sic exegeris mecum, ut solebas cum tuo filio. Nec dissimulo hoc mihi iucundiores eas fuisse, quod habebam bonam causam, cum summo studio curassem, quod tu curari volebas. Proinde etiam atque etiam rogo, ut mihi semper eadem simplicitate, quoties cessare videbor (videbor dico, nunquam enim cessabo), convicium facias, quod et ego intellegam a summo amore proficisci, et tu non meruisse me gaudeas. Vale.

### XIII

C. PLINIUS URSO SUO S.

UNQUAMNE vidisti quemquam tam laboriosum et exercitum<sup>1</sup> quam Varenum meum? cui, quod summa contentione impetraverat, defendendum et quasi rursus petendum fuit. Bithyni senatus consultum apud consules carpere ac labefactare sunt ausi atque etiam absenti principi criminari; ab illo ad senatum remissi non destiterunt.

<sup>1</sup> et exercitum *Ma, Bignons, K*, tam exerc. *Dr, Müller*.

## BOOK VI. xii.—xiii

every cause you have at heart. Be assured therefore I shall give all the assistance in my power to Vettius Priscus, especially in my peculiar field of action—I mean the Centumviral Court.

You bid me forget those letters which you wrote to me, you say, in the openness of your heart; but, believe me, there are none I remember with more complacency. They are to me the strongest proofs of your affection, since you call me to account, just as you used to call your own son. And, to confess the truth, they are so much the more agreeable, as I could make out a good case in reply; for I had very exactly performed your requests. I entreat you again and again still to reproach me with the same freedom, whenever I seem to fail (seem, I say, for fail I never will) in my duty towards you. I shall understand that the truest love inspires your reproaches; and you, I hope, may rejoice to find I did not deserve them. Farewell.

### XIII

#### TO URSUS

DID you ever behold a man so tried and harassed as my friend Varenus, who has been obliged to defend, and, as it were, to seek again, what he had with much struggle already obtained?<sup>a</sup> The Bithynians have had the assurance not only to cavil at and impugn the decree of the Senate before the consuls, but also to inveigh against it to the Emperor, who had been absent when it passed. Caesar referred them back to the Senate, where they still persisted in their course.

<sup>a</sup> See v. 20.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Egit Claudius Capito irreverenter magis quam constanter, ut qui ipsum senatus consultum apud senatum accusaret. Respondit Catus Fronto graviter et firme. Senatus ipse mirificus; nam illi quoque, qui prius negarant Vareno, quae petebat, eadem danda, postquam erant data, censuerunt; singulos enim integra re dissentire fas esse, peracta, quod pluribus placuisset, cunctis tuendum. Acilius tantum Rufus et cum eo septem an octo, septem immo, in priore sententia perseverarunt. Erant in hac paucitate non nulli, quorum temporaria gravitas vel potius gravitatis imitatio ridebatur. Tu tamen aestima, quantum nos in ipsa pugna certaminis maneat, cuius quasi praelusio atque praecursio has contentiones excitavit. Vale.

### XIV

C. PLINIUS MAURICIO SUO S.

SOLLICITAS me in Formianum. Veniam ea conditione, ne quid contra commodum tuum facias; quapactione invicem mihi caveo. Neque enim mare et litus, sed otium et libertatem<sup>1</sup> sequor; alioqui satius est in urbe remanere. Oportet enim omnia aut ad

<sup>1</sup> otium et lib. *p*, *Sichardus*, *Müller*, te, otium, lib. *Ma*, *K*, te otium et lib. *Dr*.

## BOOK VI. xiii.—xiv

Claudius Capito acted as their counsel ; thereby displaying ill-manners rather than intrepidity, since he arraigned before the Senate one of their own decrees. Catius Fronto replied to him with great solidity and spirit ; the Senate itself behaved to admiration. For even those who had opposed the petition of Varenus in the first instance were in favour of granting it, now that it had been granted. They agreed that while the motion was under debate, individual members were at liberty to express dissent ; but when once carried, the whole house was bound to support the decision of the majority. Acilius Rufus and seven or eight others (I think seven at the outside) were the only senators who persevered in their former vote. Among which small party there were some whose improvised, or, rather, counterfeit solemnity, was extremely ridiculed. You will judge from hence what a warm battle we are likely to have of it, since this prelude and skirmish, as I may call it, has occasioned so much contention. Farewell.

### XIV

#### TO MAURICIUS

I ACCEPT your invitation to visit you at your Formian villa, but it is upon condition that you put yourself to no inconvenience ; a compact which I shall also strictly observe on my part. It is not the beauties of your sea and your coast, it is ease and freedom that I aim to enjoy ; otherwise I might as well remain in Rome. For there is no middle course

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

alienum arbitrium aut ad suum facere. Mei certe stomachi haec natura est, ut nihil nisi totum et merum velit. Vale.

### XV

#### C. PLINIUS ROMANO SUO S.

MIRIFICAE rei non interfuisti, ne ego quidem; sed me recens fabula *excepit*. Passennus Paulus, splendidus eques Romanus et inprimis eruditus, scribit elegos. Gentilicium hoc illi; est enim municeps Propertii atque etiam inter maiores suos Propertium numerat. Is cum recitaret, ita coepit dicere, "Prisce, iubes." Ad hoc Iavolenus Priscus (aderat enim ut Paullo amicissimus): "Ego vero non iubeo." Cogita, qui risus hominum, qui ioci. Est omnino Priscus dubiae sanitatis, interest tamen officiis, adhibetur consiliis atque etiam ius civile publice respondet. Quo magis, quod tunc fecit, et ridiculum et notabile fuit.

Interim Paullo aliena deliratio aliquantum frigoris attulit. Tam sollicite recitaturis providendum est, non solum ut sint ipsi sani, verum etiam ut sanos adhibeant. Vale.

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<sup>a</sup> The force of *excepit* might be colloquially rendered by "button-holed." Pliny means that every one he met told him the new anecdote.

<sup>b</sup> As Priscus was a jurist of great eminence, his alleged "craziness" was probably nothing more than absent-mindedness. Thus, roused from a reverie by hearing his own name, he makes a ludicrous reply. (Church and Brodribb.)



## BOOK VI. xiv.-xv

between being absolutely at the disposal of others, and absolutely your own master ; my own palate, at least, cannot relish mixtures of any kind. Farewell.

### XV

#### TO ROMANUS

You were not present at a very droll accident which lately happened : neither was I, however, I had an early account of it.<sup>a</sup> Passennus Paulus, a distinguished Roman knight, and an eminently learned man, has a turn for Elegiac Poetry ; a talent which runs in the family, for he is a fellow-townsmen of Propertius, and actually reckons that poet among his ancestors. He was lately reciting a poem which began thus :

“ Priscus, thou dost command—”

Whereupon Iavolenus Priscus (who was present, being one of his particular friends) cried out—“ But I don't command.” Think what a peal of laughter, what numerous sallies, this occasioned ! The intellects of Priscus, you must know, are something suspicious ; yet he enters into common offices of life, is called to consultations, and publicly acts as a civil pleader, so that this behaviour was the more remarkable and ridiculous.<sup>b</sup>

Meanwhile Paulus has to thank the craziness of another for a somewhat cool reception. So you see, intending reciters cannot look too carefully, not only to their own sanity, but to that of the audience they invite. Farewell.

# THE LETTERS OF PLINY

## XVI

C. PLINIUS TACITO SUO S.

PETIS, ut tibi avunculi mei exitum scribam, quo verius tradere posteris possis. Gratias ago; nam video morti eius, si celebretur a te, immortalem gloriam esse propositam. Quamvis enim pulcherrimarum clade terrarum, ut populi, ut urbes, memorabili casu quasi semper victurus occiderit, quamvis ipse plurima opera et mansura condiderit, multum tamen perpetuitati eius scriptorum tuorum aeternitas addet. Equidem beatos puto, quibus deorum munere datum est aut facere scribenda aut scribere legenda, beatissimos vero, quibus utrumque. Horum in numero avunculus meus et suis libris et tuis erit. Quo libentius suscipio, depono etiam, quod iniungis.

Erat Miseni classemque imperio praeseans regebat. Nonum Kal. Septembres hora fere septima mater mea indicat ei apparere nubem inusitata<sup>1</sup> et magnitudine et specie. Usus ille sole, mox frigida gustaverat iacens, studebatque; poscit soleas, ascendit locum, ex quo maxime miraculum illud conspici

<sup>1</sup> inusitata *Dpra*, *Bipons*, *K*, invisitata *M*, *Müller*.

## BOOK VI. xvi

### XVI

#### TO TACITUS

YOUR request that I would send you an account of my uncle's end, so that you may transmit a more exact relation of it to posterity, deserves my acknowledgements; for if his death shall be celebrated by your pen, the glory of it, I am aware, will be rendered for ever deathless. For notwithstanding he perished, as did whole peoples and cities, in the destruction of a most beautiful region, and by a misfortune memorable enough to promise him a kind of immortality; notwithstanding he has himself composed many and lasting works; yet I am persuaded, the mentioning of him in your immortal writings, will greatly contribute to eternize his name. Happy I esteem those, whom Providence has gifted with the ability either to do things worthy of being written, or to write in a manner worthy of being read; but most happy they, (who are blessed with both talents) in which latter class my uncle will be placed both by his own writings and by yours. The more willingly do I undertake, nay, solicit, the task you set me.

He was at that time with the fleet under his command at Misenum. On the 24th of August, about one in the afternoon, my mother desired him to observe a cloud of very unusual size and appearance. He had sunned himself, then taken a cold bath, and after a leisurely luncheon was engaged in study. He immediately called for his shoes and went up an eminence from whence he might best view this very uncommon appearance. It was not at

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

poterat. Nubes, incertum procul intuentibus, ex quo monte (Vesuvium fuisse postea cognitum est), oriebatur, cuius similitudinem et formam non alia magis arbor quam pinus expresserit. Nam longissimo velut trunco elata in altum quibusdam ramis diffundebatur, credo, quia recenti spiritu evecta, dein senescente eo destituta aut etiam pondere suo victa in latitudinem evanescebat, candida interdum, interdum sordida et maculosa, prout terram cineremve sustulerat.

Magnum propiusque noscendum ut eruditissimo viro visum. Iubet Liburnicam aptari; mihi, si venire una vellem, facit copiam. Respondi studere me malle, et forte ipse, quod scriberem, dederat. Egrediebatur domo; accipit codicillos Rectinae Bassi<sup>1</sup> imminenti periculo exterriti (nam villa eius subiacebat, nec ulla nisi navibus fuga); ut se tanto discrimine eriperet, orabat. Vertit ille consilium et, quæ studioso animo inchoaverat, obit maximo. Deducit quadriremes; ascendit ipse non Retinae modo, sed multis (erat enim frequens amoenitas orae) laturus auxilium. Properat illuc, unde alii fugiunt, rectumque cursum, recta gubernacula in periculum tenent adeo solutus metu, ut omnes illius mali motus, omnes

<sup>1</sup> Bassi Gesner, Caesii Bassi, Gierig (*Cl. schol. Pers.* vi. 1<sup>1</sup>), †Tasci K, Müller e codd. (*sine cruce Merrill*).

that distance discernible from what mountain this cloud issued, but it was found afterwards to be Vesuvius. I cannot give you a more exact description of its figure, than by resembling it to that of a pine-tree; for it shot up a great height in the form of a trunk, which extended itself at the top into several branches; because I imagine, a momentary gust of air blew it aloft, and then failing, forsook it; thus causing the cloud to expand laterally as it dissolved, or possibly the downward pressure of its own weight produced this effect. It was at one moment white, at another dark and spotted, as if it had carried up earth or cinders.

My uncle, true savant that he was, deemed the phenomenon important and worth a nearer view. He ordered a light vessel to be got ready, and gave me the liberty, if I thought proper, to attend him. I replied I would rather study; and, as it happened, he had himself given me a theme for composition. As he was coming out of the house he received a note from Rectina, the wife of Bassus, who was in the utmost alarm at the imminent danger (his villa stood just below us, and there was no way to escape but by sea); she earnestly entreated him to save her from such deadly peril. He changed his first design and what he began with a philosophical, he pursued with an heroical turn of mind. He ordered large galleys to be launched, and went himself on board one, with the intention of assisting not only Rectina, but many others; for the villas stand extremely thick upon that beautiful coast. Hastening to the place from whence others were flying, he steered his direct course to the point of danger, and with such freedom from fear, as to be able to make and dictate

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

figuras, ut deprehenderat oculis, dictaret enotaretque.

Iam navibus cinis inciderat, quo propius accederet, calidior et densior, iam pumices etiam nigrique et ambusti et fracti igne lapides, iam vadum subitum ruinaeque montis litora obstantia. Cunctatus paulum, an retro flecteret, mox gubernatori ut ita faceret monenti "Fortes," inquit, "Fortuna iuvat. Pomponianum pete." Stabiis erat diremptus sinu medio (nam sensim circumactis curvatisque litoribus mare infunditur); ibi, quamquam nondum periculo appropinquante, conspicuo tamen et, cum cresceret, proximo sarcinas contulerat in naves certus fugae, si contrarius ventus resedisset; quo tunc avunculus meus secundissimo invectus complectitur trepidantem, consolatur, hortatur, utque timorem eius sua securitate leniret, deferri se in balineum iubet; lotus accubat, cenat aut hilaris<sup>1</sup> aut, quod aequae magnum, similis hilari.

Interim e Vesuvio monte pluribus locis latissimae flammae altaque incendia relucebant, quorum fulgor et claritas tenebris noctis excitabatur. Ille agrestium trepidatione ignes relictos desertasque villas per solitudinem ardere in remedium formidinis dicti-

<sup>1</sup> cenat aut hil. *M, K*, cenat atque hil. *pra*, cenatque hil. *Sichardus*.

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<sup>a</sup> Now called *Castel è Mur di Stabia* in the gulf of Naples.

## BOOK VI. xvi

his observations upon the successive motions and figures of that terrific object.

And now cinders, which grew thicker and hotter the nearer he approached, fell into the ships, then pumice-stones too, with stones blackened, scorched, and cracked by fire, then the sea ebbed suddenly from under them, while the shore was blocked up by landslips from the mountains. After considering a moment whether he should retreat, he said to the captain who was urging that course, "Fortune befriends the brave; carry me to Pomponianus." Pomponianus was then at Stabiae,<sup>a</sup> distant by half the width of the bay (for, as you know, the shore, insensibly curving in its sweep, forms here a receptacle for the sea). He had already embarked his baggage; for though at Stabiae the danger was not yet near, it was full in view, and certain to be extremely near, as soon as it spread; and he resolved to fly as soon as the contrary wind should cease. It was full favourable, however, for carrying my uncle to Pomponianus. He embraces, comforts, and encourages his alarmed friend, and in order to soothe the other's fears by his own unconcern, desires to be conducted to a bathroom; and after having bathed, he sat down to supper with great cheerfulness, or at least (what is equally heroic) with all the appearance of it.

In the meanwhile Mount Vesuvius was blazing in several places with spreading and towering flames, whose refulgent brightness the darkness of the night set in high relief. But my uncle, in order to soothe apprehensions, kept saying that some fires had been left alight by the terrified country people, and what they saw were only deserted villas on fire in the

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tabat. Tum se quieti dedit et quievit verissimo quidem somno. Nam meatus animae, qui illi propter amplitudinem corporis gravior et sonantior erat, ab iis, qui limini obversabantur, audiebatur. Sed area, ex qua diaeta adibatur, ita iam cinere mixtisque pumicibus oppleta surrexerat, ut, si longior in cubiculo mora, exitus negaretur. Excitatus procedit seque Pomponiano ceterisque, qui pervigilarant, reddit. In commune consultant, intra tecta subsistant an in aperto vagentur. Nam crebris vastisque tremoribus tecta nutabant et quasi emota sedibus suis nunc huc, nunc illuc abire aut referri videbantur. Sub dio<sup>1</sup> rursus quamquam levium exesorumque pumicum casus metuebatur; quod tamen periculorum collatio elegit. Et apud illum quidem ratio rationem, apud alios timorem timor vicit. Cervicalia capitibus imposita linteis constringunt; id munimentum adversus incidentia fuit.

Iam dies alibi, illic nox omnibus noctibus nigrior densiorque; quam tamen faces multae variaque lumina solabantur.<sup>1</sup> Placuit egredi in litus et e proximo aspicere, ecquid iam mare admitteret; quod adhuc vastum et adversum permanebat. Ibi super abiectum linteum recubans semel atque iterum frigidam poposcit hausitque. Deinde flammae flam-

<sup>1</sup> solabantur, *Cortius et cod. Laurent.* 47. 34 (teste *Keil*), solabantur *M*, solvebant *Catan.*, *u*, *Bipons*.



## BOOK VI. xvi

andoned district. After this he retired to rest, and it is most certain that his rest was a most genuine slumber; for his breathing, which, as he was pretty fat, was somewhat heavy and sonorous, was heard by those who attended at his chamber-door. But the court which led to his apartment now lay so deep under a mixture of pumice-stones and ashes, that if he had continued longer in his bedroom, egress would have been impossible. On being aroused, he came out, and returned to Pomponianus and the others, who had sat up all night. They consulted together as to whether they should hold out in the house, or wander about in the open. For the house now tottered under repeated and violent concussions, and seemed to rock to and fro as if torn from its foundations. In the open air, on the other hand, they dreaded the falling pumice-stones, light and porous though they were; yet this, by comparison, seemed the lesser danger of the two; a conclusion which my uncle arrived at by balancing reasons, and the others by balancing fears. They tied pillows upon their heads with napkins; and this was their whole defence against the showers that fell round them.

It was now day everywhere else, but there a deeper darkness prevailed than in the most obscure night; relieved, however, by many torches and divers illuminations. They thought proper to go down upon the shore to observe from close at hand if they could possibly put out to sea, but they found the waves still run extremely high and contrary. There my uncle having thrown himself down upon a disused sail, repeatedly called for, and drank, a draught of cold water; soon after, flames, and a

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

marumque praeunntius odor sulfuris alios in fugar<sub>n</sub> vertunt, excitant illum. Innitens<sup>1</sup> servulis duob<sub>us</sub> assurrexit et statim concidit, ut ego colligo,<sup>2</sup> cras<sup>1</sup>iore caligine spiritu obstructo clausoque stomacho, qui illi natura invalidus et angustus et frequenter inter-aestuans<sup>3</sup> erat. Ubi dies redditus (is ab eo, quem novissime viderat, tertius), corpus inventum est integrum, illaesum opertumque, ut fuerat indutus; habitus corporis quiescenti quàm defuncto similior.

Interim Miseni ego et mater. Sed nihil ad historiam; nec tu aliud quam de exitu eius scire voluisti. Finem ergo faciam. Unum adiciam, omnia me, quibus interfueram, quaeque statim, cum maxime vera memorantur, audieram, persecutum. Tu potissima excerpes. Aliud est enim epistulam, aliud historiam, aliud amico, aliud omnibus scribere. Vale.

### XVII

C. PLINIUS RESTITUTO SUO S.

INDIGNATIUNCULAM, quam in cuiusdam amici auditorio cepi, non possum mihi temperare quo minus apud te, quia non contingit coram, per epistulam

<sup>1</sup> innitens *M*, *Bipons*, *K*, innixus *Dpra*, *Müller*.

<sup>2</sup> colligo *M*, *Bipons*, *K*, coniecto *Dpra*, *Müller*.

## BOOK VI. xvi.-xvii

strong smell of sulphur, which was the forerunner of them, dispersed the rest of the company in flight; him they only aroused. He raised himself up with the assistance of two of his slaves, but instantly fell; some unusually gross vapour, as I conjecture, having obstructed his breathing and blocked his windpipe, which was not only naturally weak and constricted, but chronically inflamed. When day dawned again (the third from that he last beheld) his body was found entire and uninjured, and still fully clothed as in life; its posture was that of a sleeping, rather than a dead man.

Meanwhile my mother and I were at Misenum. But this has no connection with history, and your inquiry went no farther than concerning my uncle's death. I will therefore put an end to my letter. Suffer me only to add, that I have faithfully related to you what I was either an eye-witness of myself, or heard at the time, when report speaks most truly. You will select what is most suitable to your purpose; for there is a great difference between a letter, and an history; between writing to a friend, and writing for the public. Farewell.

## XVII

### TO RESTITUTUS

I CANNOT forbear pouring out before you in a letter since I have no opportunity of doing so in person, the little fit of anger I was taken with at a recital in a friend's house. The work read to us was a highly

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<sup>3</sup> *interacstuan* *Dpa*, *Bipons*, *Müller*, *intus aest. r*, *aestuans M, K*.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

effundam. Recitabatur liber absolutissimus. Hunc duo aut tres, ut sibi et paucis videntur, deserti, surdis mutisque similes audiebant. Non labra diduxerunt, non moverunt manum, non denique assurrexerunt, saltem lassitudine sedendi.

Quae tanta gravitas? quae tanta sapientia? quae immo pigritia, arrogantia, sinisteritas ac potius amentia, in hoc totum diem impendere, ut offendas, ut inimicum relinquo, ad quem tamquam amicissimum veneris? Disertior ipse es? Tanto magis ne invideris. Nam, qui invidet, minor est. Denique, sive plus sive minus sive idem praestas, lauda vel inferiorem vel superiorem vel parem; superiorem, quia, nisi laudandus ille, non potes ipse laudari; inferiorem aut parem, quia pertinet ad tuam gloriam quam maximum videri, quem praecedis vel exaequas.

Equidem omnes, qui aliquid in studiis faciunt, venerari etiam mirarique soleo. Est enim res difficilis, ardua, fastidiosa, et quae eos, a quibus contemnitur, invicem contemnat. Nisi forte aliud iudicas tu. Quamquam quis uno te reverentior huius operis, quis benignior aestimator? Qua ratione ductus tibi potissimum indignationem meam prodidi, quem habere socium maxime poteram. Vale.

## BOOK VI. xvii

finished performance ; but there were two or three persons among the audience, men of eloquence in their own and a few others' estimation, who sate like so many deaf-mutes, without so much as moving a lip or a hand, or once rising to their feet, even by way of relief from a seated posture.

Now what means all this portentous wisdom and solemnity, or rather, indeed (to give it its true appellation), this indolence, this arrogance, this gaucherie, nay, idiocy, that will be at the expense of a whole day merely to affront and leave as your enemy a man you visited as a particular friend ? Are you more eloquent than the orator you chance to be listening to ? So much the rather should you be on your guard against envy, a passion only felt towards our superiors. In fine, be your talent greater or equal, or less than the performer's, you should still praise him ; if less, because if one of more exalted abilities does not meet with applause, neither possibly can you : if greater or equal, because the higher his glory rises whom you equal or excel, the more considerable yours must necessarily be.

For my own part, I honour and revere all who discover any talent for oratory ; for the Muse of Eloquence is a coy and haughty dame, who scorns to reside with those that despise her. But perhaps you are not of this opinion : yet who has a greater regard for this glorious science, or is a more candid judge of it than yourself ? In confidence of which, I chose to vent my indignation particularly to you, as not doubting you would be the first to share it. Farewell.

# THE LETTERS OF PLINY

## XVIII

C. PLINIUS SABINO SUO S.

ROGAS, ut agam Firmanorum publicam causam; quod ego, quamquam plurimis occupationibus distentus, adnitar. Cupio enim et ornatissimam coloniam advocationis officio et te gratissimo tibi munere obstringere. Nam, cum familiaritatem nostram, ut soles praedicare, ad praesidium ornamentumque tibi sumpseris, nihil est, quod negare debeam, praesertim pro patria petenti. Quid enim precibus aut honestius piis aut efficacius amantis? Proinde Firmanis tuis ac iam potius nostris obliga fidem meam; quos labore et studio meo dignos cum splendor ipsorum tum hoc maxime pollicetur, quod credibile est optimos esse, inter quos tu talis moreris.<sup>1</sup> Vale.

## XIX

C. PLINIUS NEPOTI SUO S.

SCIS tu accessisse pretium agris, praecipue suburbanis? Causa subitae caritatis res multis agitata sermonibus. Proximis comitiis honestissimas voces senatus expressit: "Candidati ne conviventur, ne mittant munera, ne pecunias deponant." Ex quibus

<sup>1</sup> moreris *M*, *Bipons*, extiteris *Dpra*, *K*, *Müller*.

## BOOK VI. xviii.—xix

### XVIII

#### TO SABINUS

I WILL endeavour as you desire to undertake the cause of the Firmani, though I have many affairs upon my hands: for I should be extremely glad to oblige an illustrious colony by my professional services, and yourself by an acceptable favour. How indeed can I refuse you anything, who profess to have sought my friendship as your ornament and support, especially when your request is on behalf of your native place? For what can be more honourable than the prayers of dutious affection, or more powerful than those of a friend? You may engage for me therefore to your, or rather as I should now call them *our*, friends the Firmani. And though their own illustrious character promises that they will deserve my care and pains; yet I derive my chief assurance of this, from seeing a man of your distinguished virtues tarrying amongst them.

### XIX

#### TO NEPOS

ARE you informed that the price of land is risen especially in the neighbourhood of Rome? The cause of this sudden advance has been much discussed. At the last assembly for the election of magistrates, the Senate passed a very honourable decree, whereby the candidates for any office are prohibited from giving any treat, present, or depositing sums of money.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> *sc.* in the hands of agents, to be distributed as bribes.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

duo priora tam aperte quam immodice fiebant, hoc tertium, quamquam occultaretur, pro comperto habebatur.

Homullus deinde noster, vigilanter usus hoc consensu senatus sententiae loco postulavit, ut consules desiderium universorum notum principi facerent peterentque, sicut aliis vitiis huic quoque providentia sua occurreret. Occurrit; nam sumptus candidatorum foedos illos et infames ambitus lege restrinxit; eosdem patrimonii tertiam partem conferre iussit in ea, quae solo continerentur, deforme arbitratus, ut erat,<sup>1</sup> honorem petituros urbem Italiamque non pro patria, sed pro hospitio aut stabulo quasi peregrinantes habere.

Concursant ergo candidati; certatim, quidquid venale audiunt, emptitant, quoque sint plura venalia, efficiunt. Proinde, si paenitet te Italicorum praediorum, hoc vendendi tempus tam hercule quam in provinciis comparandi, dum iidem candidati illic vendunt, ut hic emant. Vale.

### XX

C. PLINIUS CORNELIO TACITO SUO S.

Āis tē adductum litterīs, quās exigenti tibi dē morte avunculi mei scripsi, cupere cognoscere, quōs ego

<sup>1</sup> ut erat *a*, *Bipons*, *Müller*, et erat *K*, *codd.*



## BOOK VI. xix.-xx

The two former of these abuses were practised with as little restraint as concealment; the latter, though carried on secretly was well known to exist.

Our friend Homullus, alertly taking advantage of this unanimity of the Senate, instead of speaking to the motion before the house, moved that the consuls should acquaint the Emperor of the universal wish and request him to obviate this abuse, as he has others, by personal interposition. The Emperor was pleased to do so, and published an edict to restrain those infamous largesses; wherein he directs that no person shall be admitted as a candidate who does not invest a third part of his fortune in real estate; esteeming it highly indecent (as no doubt it is) that those who seek office should look upon Rome and Italy not as their native land, but as a hospice or inn for them upon their travels.

Hence there is a general struggle among candidates; they bid against each other for every estate they hear is for sale, and thus bring more into the market. If therefore you repent of owning Italian lands, now is the time to sell them. And now, too, in good faith is the time to acquire estates in the provinces, for those same candidates are selling there, in order to buy here. Farewell.

## XX

### TO CORNELIUS TACITUS

THE letter which, in compliance with your request, I wrote to you concerning the death of my uncle,<sup>a</sup> has raised, you say, your curiosity to know not only

<sup>a</sup> See vi. 16.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Miseni relictus (id enim ingressus abrūperam) nōn solum metūs, vērum etiam cāsus pertulerim.

“Quamquam animus meminisse horret,  
Incipiam.”<sup>1</sup>

Profectō avunculō ipse reliquum tempus studiis (ideo enim remanseram) impendī: nōx balineum, cena, somnus inquietus et brevis. Praecesserat per multos diēs tremor terrae minus formidolōsus, quia Campāniae solitus; illa verō nocte ita invaluit, ut nōn movērī omnia, sed ēvertī crēderentur. Inrumpit in cubiculum meum māter; surgēbam invicem, sī quiesceret, excitāturus. Residimus<sup>2</sup> in arēa domūs, quae mare ā tectis modicō spatiō dīvidēbat. Dubitō, cōstantiam vocāre an imprudentiam dēbeam; agēbam enim duodēvicēsimum annum. Poscō librum Titī Livii et quasi per otium legō, atque etiam, ut coeperam, excerptō. Ecce amīcus avunculī, qui nūper ad eum ex Hispānia vēnerat, ut mē et mātrem sedentēs, mē verō etiam legentem videt, illius patientiam, sēcūritātem meam corripit. Nihilō segnius ego intentus in librum.

Iam hōra diēi p̄ima, et adhūc dubius et quasi languidus diēs. Iam quassātis circumiacentibus tectis, quamquam in apertō locō, angustō tamen, magnus et certus ruinae metus. Tum dēmum

<sup>1</sup> Verg. *Aen.* ii. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Residimus *Bipons*, *K*, *Merrill* (e cod. *Urb.*), resedimus *Dpra*, *Müller*, residemus *M*.

what terrors, but what calamities I endured when left behind at Misenum (for there I broke off my narrative).

“Though my shock’d soul recoils, my tongue shall tell.”

My uncle having set out, I gave the rest of the day to study—the object which had kept me at home. After which I bathed, dined, and retired to short and broken slumbers. There had been for several days before some shocks of earthquake, which the less alarmed us as they are frequent in Campania; but that night they became so violent that one might think that the world was not being merely shaken, but turned topsy-turvy. My mother flew to my chamber; I was just rising, meaning on my part to awaken her, if she was asleep. We sat down in the forecourt of the house, which separated it by a short space from the sea. I know not whether I should call it courage or inexperience—I was not quite eighteen—but I called for a volume of Livy, and began to read, and even went on with the extracts I was making from it, as if nothing were the matter. Lo and behold, a friend of my uncle’s, who was just come to him from Spain, appears on the scene; observing my mother and me seated, and that I have actually a book in my hand, he sharply censures her patience and my indifference; nevertheless I still went on intently with my author.

It was now six o’clock in the morning, the light still ambiguous and faint. The buildings around us already tottered, and though we stood upon open ground, yet as the place was narrow and confined, there was certain and formidable danger from their

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

excēdere oppidō vīsum. Sequitur vulgus attonitum, quodque in pavōre simile prudentiae, aliēnum cōsiliū suō praefert ingentique agmine abeuntēs premit et impellit. Egressī tecta consistimus. Multa ibi mīranda, multās formīdinēs patimur. Nam vehicula, quae prōdūcī iusserāmus, quamquam in plānissimō campō, in contrāriās partēs agēbantur ac nē lapidibus quidem fulta in eōdem vestīgiō quīescēbant. Praetereā mare in sē resorbēri et tremore terrae quasi repellī videbamus. Certē prōcesserat litus multaue animālia maris siccīs arēnīs dētinebat. Ab alterō latere nūbes atra et horrenda ignēi spīritūs tortīs vibrātisque discursibus rupta in longās flammārum figurās dehiscēbat; fulgoribus illae et similēs et maiōrēs erant.

Tum vero ille idem ex Hispania amicus acrius et instantius, "Si frater," inquit, "tuus, tuus avunculus vivit, vult esse vos salvos: si periit, superstites voluit. Proinde quid cessatis evadere?" Respondimus non commissuros nos, ut de salute eius incerti nostrae consuleremus. Non moratus ultra proripit se effusoque cursu periculo aufertur.<sup>1</sup> Nec multo post illa nubes descendere in terras, operire maria; cinxerat Capreas et absconderat, Miseni quod procurrit, abstulerat. Tum mater orare, hortari, iubere,

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collapsing. It was not till then we resolved to quit the town. The common people follow us in the utmost consternation, preferring the judgment of others to their own (wherein the extreme of fear resembles prudence), and impel us onwards by pressing in a crowd upon our rear. Being got outside the houses, we halt in the midst of a most strange and dreadful scene. The coaches which we had ordered out, though upon the most level ground, were sliding to and fro, and could not be kept steady even when stones were put against the wheels. Then we beheld the sea sucked back, and as it were repulsed by the convulsive motion of the earth; it is certain at least the shore was considerably enlarged, and now held many sea-animals captive on the dry sand. On the other side, a black and dreadful cloud bursting out in gusts of igneous serpentine vapour now and again yawned open to reveal long fantastic flames, resembling flashes of lightning but much larger.

Our Spanish friend already mentioned now spoke with more warmth and instancy: "If your brother—if your uncle," said he, "is yet alive, he wishes you both may be saved; if he has perished, it was his desire that you might survive him. Why therefore do you delay your escape?" We could never think of our own safety, we said, while we were uncertain of his. Without more ado our friend hurried off, and took himself out of danger at the top of his speed.

Soon afterwards, the cloud I have described began to descend upon the earth, and cover the sea. It had already begirt the hidden Capreae, and blotted from sight the promontory of Misenum. My mother now began to beseech, exhort, and command me to

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

quoquo modo fugerem ; posse enim iuvenem, se et annis et corpore gravem bene morituram, si mihi causa mortis non fuisset. Ego contra salvum me nisi una non futurum ; deinde manum eius amplexus addere gradum cogo ; paret aegre, incusatque se, quod me moretur. Iam cinis, adhuc tamen rarus. Respicio ; densa caligo tergis imminebat, quae nos torrentis modo infusa terrae sequebatur. “Deflectamus,” inquam, “dum videmus, ne in via strati comitantium turba in tenebris obteramur.” Vix consederamus,<sup>1</sup> et nox, non quasi illunis aut nubila, sed qualis in locis clausis lumine exstincto. Audires ululatus feminarum, infantium quiritatus, clamores virorum ; alii parentes, alii liberos, alii coniuges vocibus requirebant, vocibus noscitabant ; hi suum casum, illi suorum miserebantur ; erant, qui metu mortis mortem precarentur. Multi ad deos manus tollere : plures nusquam iam deos ullos aeternamque illam et novissimam noctem mundo interpretabantur.

Nec defuerunt, qui fictis mentitisque terroribus vera pericula augerent. Aderant, qui Miseni illud ruisse, illud ardere falso, sed credentibus nuntiabant. Paulum reluxit ; quod non dies nobis, sed adventantis ignis indicium videbatur. Et ignis quidem longius substitit, tenebrae rursus, cinis rursus multus et

<sup>1</sup> consederamus *Bipons, Müller, consider. K, Merrill.*

escape as best I might ; a young man could do it ; she, burdened with age and corpulency, would die easy if only she had not caused my death.) I replied, I would not be saved without her, and taking her by the hand, I hurried her on. She complies reluctantly and not without reproaching herself for retarding me. Ashes now fall upon us, though as yet in no great quantity. I looked behind me ; gross darkness pressed upon our rear, and came rolling over the land after us like a torrent. I proposed while we yet could see, to turn aside, lest we should be knocked down in the road by the crowd that followed us and trampled to death in the dark. We had scarce sat down, when darkness overspread us, not like that of a moonless or cloudy night, but of a room when it is shut up, and the lamp put out. You could hear the shrieks of women, the crying of children, and the shouts of men ; some were seeking their children, others their parents, others their wives or husbands, and only distinguishing them by their voices ; one lamenting his own fate, another that of his family ; some praying to die, from the very fear of dying ; many lifting their hands to the gods ; but the greater part imagining that there were no gods left anywhere, and that the last and eternal night was come upon the world.

There were even some who augmented the real perils by imaginary terrors. Newcomers reported that such or such a building at Misenum had collapsed or taken fire—falsely, but they were credited. By degrees it grew lighter ; which we imagined to be rather the warning of approaching fire (as in truth it was) than the return of day : however, the fire stayed at a distance from us : then again came darkness, and

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

gravis. Hunc identidem adsurgentes excutiebamus ; operti alioqui atque etiam oblisi pondere essemus. Possem gloriari non gemitum mihi, non vocem parum fortem in tantis periculis excidissem, nisi me cum omnibus, omnia mecum perire misero, magno tamen mortalitatis solacio credidissem.

Tandem illa caligo tenuata quasi in fumum nebulamve decessit ; mox dies verus, sol etiam effulsit, luridus tamen, qualis esse, cum deficit, solet. Occursabant trepidantibus adhuc oculis mutata omnia altoque cinere tamquam nive obducta. Regressi Misenum curatis utcunque corporibus suspensam dubiamque noctem spe ac metu exegimus. Metus praevalebat ; nam et tremor terrae perseverabat, et plerique lymphati terrificis vaticinationibus et sua et aliena mala ludificabantur. Nobis tamen ne tunc quidem, quamquam et expertis periculum et expectantibus, abeundi consilium, donec de avunculo nuntius.

Haec nequaquam historia digna non scripturus leges et tibi, scilicet qui requisisti, imputabis, si digna ne epistula quidem videbuntur. Vale.



a heavy shower of ashes ; we were obliged every now and then to rise and shake them off, otherwise we should have been buried and even crushed under their weight. I might have boasted that amidst dangers so appalling, not a sigh or expression of fear escaped from me, had not my support been founded in that miserable, though strong consolation, that all mankind were involved in the same calamity, and that I was perishing with the world itself.

At last this dreadful darkness was attenuated by degrees to a kind of cloud or smoke, and passed away ; presently the real day returned, and even the sun appeared, though lurid as when an eclipse is in progress. Every object that presented itself to our yet affrighted gaze was changed, cover'd over with a drift of ashes, as with snow. We returned to Misenum, where we refreshed ourselves as well as we could, and passed an anxious night between hope and fear ; though indeed with a much larger share of the latter, for the earthquake still continued, and several enthusiastic people were giving a grotesque turn to their own and their neighbours' calamities by terrible predictions. Even then, however, my mother and I, notwithstanding the danger we had passed, and that which still threatened us, had no thoughts of leaving the place, till we should receive some tidings of my uncle.

And now, you will read this narrative, so far beneath the dignity of a history, without any view of transferring it to your own ; and indeed you must impute it to your own request, if it shall appear scarce worthy of a letter. Farewell.

# THE LETTERS OF PLINY

## XXI

C. PLINIUS CANINIO SUO S.

SUM ego is,<sup>1</sup> qui mirer antiquos, non tamen ut quidam temporum nostrorum ingenia despicio. Neque enim quasi lassa et effeta natura, ut nihil iam laudabile pariat. Atque adeo nuper audii Vergilium Romanum paucis legentem comoediam ad exemplar veteris comoediae scriptam tam bene, ut esse quandoque possit exemplar.

Nescio, an noris hominem. Quamquam nosse debes; est enim probitate morum, ingenii elegantia, operum varietate monstrabilis. Scripsit mimiambos tenuiter, argute, venuste atque in hoc genere eloquentissime (nullum est enim genus, quod absolutum non possit eloquentissimum dici), scripsit comoedias Menandrum aliosque aetatis eiusdem aemulatus; licet has inter Plautinas Terentianasque numeres.

Nunc primum se in vetere comoedia, sed non tamquam inciperet, ostendit. Non illi vis, non granditas,

<sup>1</sup> sum ego is, qui mirer *Gierig, Müller*, sum ex iis, qui mirer *codd.*, ex iis, qui mirantur *Schäfer*.

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<sup>a</sup> i.e. the Aristophanic; see note below. Vergilius Romanus is otherwise unknown.

<sup>b</sup> On *mimiambi* see IV. 3, note.

<sup>c</sup> The Alexandrian critics divided Attic Comedy into the "Old" and the "New." Aristophanes is the greatest master of the former, which deals with personal and political

## BOOK VI. xxi

### XXI

#### TO CANINUS

THOUGH I acknowledge myself an admirer of the ancients, yet I am very far from despising, as some affect to do, the genius of the moderns : nor can I suppose, that nature in these latter ages is so worn out, as to be incapable of any valuable production. On the contrary, I have lately had the pleasure of hearing Vergilius Romanus read to a few select friends a Comedy so justly formed upon the plan of the Ancient,<sup>a</sup> that it may one day serve itself for a model.

I know not whether he is in the number of your acquaintance ; I am sure at least he deserves to be so, as he is greatly distinguished by the probity of his manners, the elegance of his genius, and the variety of his productions. He has written some very agreeable pieces of the burlesque kind in Iambics,<sup>b</sup> with much delicacy, wit and humour, and I will add too, even eloquence ; for every species of composition, which is finished in its kind, may with propriety be termed eloquent. He has also composed some Comedies after the manner of Menander and other authors of that age, which deserve to be ranked with those of Plautus and Terence.

He has now, for the first time, attempted the ancient<sup>c</sup> Comedy, but in such a manner as to shew he is a perfect master in this way. Strength, majesty, and delicacy, softness, poignancy, and wit, satire ; Menander of the latter, which satirised types, not individuals, and created the stock-characters we meet in the Latin adaptations of Plautus and Terence.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

non subtilitas, non amaritudo, non dulcedo, non lepos defuit; ornavit virtutes, insectatus est vitia, fictis nominibus decenter, veris usus est apte. Circa me tantum benignitate nimia modum excessit, nisi quod tamen poëtis mentiri licet. In summa extorquebo ei librum legendumque, immo ediscendum mittam tibi; neque enim dubito futurum ut non deponas, si semel sumpseris. Vale.

### XXII

C. PLINIUS TIRONI SUO S.

MAGNA res acta est omnium, qui sunt provinciis praefuturi, magna omnium, qui se simpliciter credunt amicis. Lustricus Bruttianus cum Montanum<sup>1</sup> Atticinum, comitem suum, in multis flagitiis deprehendisset, Caesari scripsit. Atticinus flagitiis addidit, ut quem deceperat, accusaret. Recepta cognitio est. Fui in consilio; egit uterque pro se, egit autem carptim et κατὰ κεφάλαιον, quo genere veritas statim ostenditur.

<sup>1</sup> Montanum *p*, *Catan. a*, *Bipons*, Montanium *M Dr*, *K*.  
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## BOOK VI. xxi.—xxii

are the graces which shine out in this performance with full lustre. He represents Virtue in the fairest colours, at the same time that he lashes vice; he makes use of feigned names with great propriety, of real ones with much justness. With respect only to myself, I should say he has erred through an excess of good-will, if I did not know that fiction is the privilege of poets. In a word, I will insist upon his letting me have the copy, that I may send it to you for your perusal, or rather that you may get it by heart; for I am well persuaded when you have once taken it up, you will not easily lay it aside. Farewell.

### XXII

#### TO TIRO

AN affair has lately been transacted here, which nearly concerns those who shall hereafter be appointed governors of provinces, as well as every man who too incautiously trusts his friends. Lustricus Bruttianus having detected his lieutenant, Montanus Atticinus, in several enormous crimes, wrote a report to the Emperor. Atticinus on the other hand added to his guilt by commencing a prosecution against the friend whose confidence he had abused. His information was received, and I was one of the assessors at this trial. Both parties pleaded their own cause, but in a summary way, keeping closely to the articles of the charge; a method by much the shortest of discovering the truth.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Protulit Bruttianus testamentum suum, quod Atticini manu scriptum esse dicebat; hoc enim et arcana familiaritas et querendi de eo, quem sic amasset, necessitas indicabatur. Enumeravit crimina foeda manifesta; quae ille, cum diluere non posset, ita regessit, ut, dum defenditur, turpis, dum accusat, sceleratus probaretur. Corrupto enim scribae servo interceperat commentarios intercideratque ac per summum nefas utebatur adversus amicum crimine suo.

Fecit pulcherrime Caesar; non enim de Bruttiano, sed statim de Atticino perrogavit. Damnatus et in insulam relegatus; Bruttiano iustissimum integritatis testimonium redditum, quem quidem etiam constantiae gloria secuta est. Nam defensus expeditissime accusavit vehementer nec minus acer quam bonus et sincerus apparuit.

Quod tibi scripsi, ut te sortitum provinciam prae-monerem, plurimum tibi credas nec cuiquam satis fidas, deinde scias, si quis forte te, quod abominor, fallat, paratam ultionem; qua tamen ne sit opus, etiam atque etiam attende. Neque enim tam iucundum est vindicari quam decipi miserum. Vale.

Bruttianus, as a proof of the implicit confidence he had reposed in his friend, and that nothing but absolute necessity could have extorted from him this complaint, produced his will ; all, as he said, in the hand-writing of Atticinus. He then enumerated the latter's infamous and patent crimes. Being unable to rebut the accusations, Atticinus resorted to counter-charges, which only served to show his cowardliness as defendant and his villainy as plaintiff. For it came out that by bribing a slave belonging to Bruttianus' secretary, he had got at his account-books, which he falsified ; and had the consummate villainy to make this criminal act a weapon against his friend.

The Emperor took an extremely noble course ; he immediately asked the verdict of the house, not upon Bruttianus, but Atticinus. He was condemned, and banished to an island. Bruttianus was thus accorded a well-deserved testimony of his integrity, and further reaped the credit of having behaved courageously. For he defended himself promptly, pressed his charges against Atticinus with vigour, and approved himself no less a man of spirit than of worth and honesty.

I send you this account firstly as a caution to depend mainly upon yourself in the government you have obtained, and not trust anyone very far ; next, to assure you that if you should happen to be imposed upon (which Heaven forefend) you will readily meet with satisfaction here. Nevertheless, be constantly on the watch that you may stand in no need of it ; for the pleasure of being redressed cannot compensate the wretchedness of being deceived. Farewell.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

### XXIII

C. PLINIUS TRIARIO SUO S.

IMPENSE petis, ut agam causam pertinentem ad curam tuam, pulchram alioquin et famosam. Faciam, sed non gratis. “Qui fieri potest,” inquis, “ut non gratis tu?” Potest; exigam enim mercedem honestiorem gratuito patrocinio. Peto atque etiam paciscor, ut simul agat Cremutius Ruso. Solitum hoc mihi et iam in pluribus claris adolescentibus factitatum. Nam mire concupisco bonos iuvenes ostendere foro, adsignare famae.

Quod si cui, praestare Rusoni meo debeo vel propter natales ipsius vel propter eximiam mei caritatem; quem magni aestimo in isdem iudiciis, ex isdem etiam partibus conspici, audiri. Obliga me, obliga, ante quam dicat; nam cum dixerit, gratias ages. Spondeo sollicitudini tuae, spei meae, magnitudini causae suffecturum. Est indolis optimae brevi producturus alios, si interim productus<sup>1</sup> fuerit a nobis. Neque enim cuiquam tam clarum statim ingenium, ut possit emergere, nisi illi materia, occasio, fautor etiam commendatorque contingat. Vale.

<sup>1</sup> productus *Dr*, *K*, provectus *Mpa*.



## XXIII

## TO TRIARIUS

You earnestly request me to undertake a cause in which you are nearly concerned, and which, besides, is in itself honourable and famous. Well, I will be your counsel, but not without a fee. "Is it possible," you exclaim, "that my friend Pliny should be so mercenary?" In truth it is; for I insist upon a reward which will do me more honour than to give my patronage gratuitously. I request then—nay, I stipulate, that Cremutius Ruso may be joined with me as counsel. This is a practice which I have frequently observed with respect to several distinguished youths; as I take infinite pleasure in introducing young men of merit to the bar, and assigning them over to Fame.

But if ever I owed this good office to any man, it is certainly to Ruso, not only upon account of his parentage, but his exceptional affection to me; and I should highly value the opportunity of letting him appear in the same cause and on the same side with myself. Oblige me in this; *oblige* is the word, until he has pleaded your cause, but then you will thank me for doing you a favour. I will be answerable that he shall acquit himself in such a manner as your solicitude, my hopes, and the importance of the cause demand. He is a youth of a most excellent disposition, and when once I shall have produced his merit, we shall soon see him forward that of others; as indeed no man's talents, however shining, can raise him at once from obscurity unless they find scope, opportunity, and also a patron to recommend them. Farewell.

# THE LETTERS OF PLINY

## XXIV

C. PLINIUS MACRO SUO S.

QUAM multum interest, quid a quo<sup>1</sup> fiat! Eadem enim facta claritate vel obscuritate facientium aut tolluntur altissime aut humillime deprimuntur. Navigabam per Larium nostrum, cum senior amicus ostendit mihi villam atque etiam cubiculum, quod in lacum prominet. 'Ex hoc,' inquit, 'aliquando municeps nostra cum marito se praecipitavit.' Causam requisivi. Maritus ex diutino morbo circa velanda corporis ulceribus putrescebat: uxor, ut inspiceret, exegit; neque enim quemquam fidelius indicaturum, possetne sanari. Vidit, desperavit; hortata est, ut moreretur, comesque ipsa mortis, dux immo et exemplum et necessitas fuit. Nam se cum marito ligavit abiecitque in lacum.

Quod factum ne mihi quidem, qui municeps, nisi proxime auditum est; non quia minus illo clarissimo Arriae facto, sed quia minor ipsa. Vale.

<sup>1</sup> quid a quo *Casaub.*, *Bipons*, quid a quoque *MD pra*, a quo quid *K*, a quo quidque *K*<sup>1</sup>, *Müller*.

## XXIV

## TO MACER

How much does the fame of human actions depend upon the station of those who perform them ! The very same conduct shall either be extolled to the skies or lie unregarded in the dust, as it happens to proceed from a person of conspicuous or obscure rank. I was sailing lately upon our Larius <sup>a</sup> with an old man of my acquaintance, who pointed out to me a villa, and particularly one of its chambers which projected into the lake. "From that room," said he, "a woman of our city once threw herself and her husband." Upon inquiring into the cause, he informed me that her husband having been long afflicted with an ulcer in those parts which modesty conceals, she exacted his leave to inspect it, protesting that no one would give him a more honest opinion whether it was curable. She looked and she despaired. She then advised him to put an end to his life ; and made herself not only the companion but actually the guide, example, and instrument of his death ; for tying herself to her husband, she plunged with him into the lake.

Even I, her fellow-townsmen, never heard of this woman's act until the other day ; it remains thus unknown, not because it was less nobly done than Arria's famous deed, but because she was less nobly born than Arria. Farewell.

<sup>a</sup> The Lake of Como. Macer was evidently, like Pliny, a native of Comum.

# THE LETTERS OF PLINY

## XXV

C. PLINIUS HISPANO SUO S.

SCRIBIS Robustum, splendidum equitem Romanum, cum Attilio Scauro, amico meo, Ocriculum usque commune iter peregrisse, deinde nusquam comparuisse; petis, ut Scaurus veniat nosque, si potest, in aliqua inquisitionis vestigia inducat. Veniet; vereor, ne frustra. Suspicio enim tale nescio quid Robusto accidisse quale aliquando Metilio Crispo, municipi meo. Huic ego ordinem impetraveram atque etiam proficiscenti quadraginta milia nummum ad instruendum se ornandumque donaveram nec postea aut epistulas eius aut aliquem de exitu nuntium accepi. Interceptusne sit a suis an cum suis, dubium; certe non ipse, non quisquam ex servis eius apparuit.

Utinam ne in Robusto idem experiamur<sup>1</sup>! Tamen arcessamus Scaurum; demus hoc tuis, demus optimi adulescentis honestissimis precibus, qui pietate mira, mira etiam sagacitate patrem quaerit. Di faveant, ut sic inveniat ipsum, quemadmodum iam, cum quo fuisset, invenit! Vale.

<sup>1</sup> Utinam ne—experiamur *Bipons*, apparuit ut ne Rob. quidem. Exper. tamen, arcess. *MDp, K*, Ut ne in Rob. quoque idem exper. Tamen accers. *K*<sup>1</sup>.

## XXV

## TO HISPANUS

You inform me that Robustus, a distinguished Roman knight, travelled along with my friend Attilius Scaurus as far as Ocriculum, but has never been heard of since. In compliance with your request, I shall send for Scaurus, in order to see if he can give us any clue to tracing him out ; though I fear, indeed, it will be to no purpose. I suspect an accident of the same unaccountable kind has befallen Robustus, as formerly happened to my townsman Metilius Crispus. I procured a company for him in the army, and gave him when he set out 40,000 sesterces for his equipage : but I never received any letter from him afterwards, or any tidings of his end. Whether he was murdered by his servants, or together with them, is uncertain ; however, neither he nor they ever appeared more.

I wish we may not find it thus with respect to Robustus ; nevertheless I shall send for Scaurus. I cannot refuse this either to your request, or the very laudable entreaties of that most excellent youth his son, who discovers as much good sense in the method, as he does filial affection in the zeal of his inquiry. Heaven grant we may have the same success in finding his father, as he has had in discovering the person that accompanied him ! Farewell.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

### XXVI

C. PLINIUS SERVIANO SUO S.

GAUDEO et gratulor, quod Fusco Salinatori filiam tuam destinasti. Domus patricia, pater honestissimus, mater pari laude ; ipse studiosus, litteratus, etiam disertus, puer simplicitate, comitate iuvenis, senex gravitate ; neque enim amore decipior. Amo quidem effuse (ita officiis, ita reverentia meruit), iudico tamen, et quidem tanto acrius, quanto magis amo, tibi, ut qui exploraverim, spondeo habiturum te generum, quo melior fingi ne voto quidem potuit. Superest, ut avum te quam maturissime similitum sui faciat. Quam felix tempus illud, quo mihi liberos illius, nepotes tuos ut meos vel liberos vel nepotes ex vestro sinu sumere et quasi pari iure tenere continget ! Vale.

### XXVII

C. PLINIUS SEVERO SUO S.

ROGAS, ut cogitem, quid designatus consul in honorem principis censeas. Facilis inventio, non facilis electio ; est enim ex virtutibus eius larga

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## BOOK VI. xxvi.—xxvii

### XXVI

#### TO SERVIANUS

I AM extremely rejoiced to hear, that you have betrothed your daughter to Fulcus Salinator, and congratulate you upon it. His family is patrician, and both his father and mother are persons of the most exalted merit. As for himself, he is studious, learned, even eloquent, and with all the innocence of a child, unites the sprightliness of youth to the wisdom of age. I am not, believe me, duped by my affection; for though I do love him beyond measure (as his services and respect to me well deserve) I yet can judge him, and the more vigorously for loving him so well. Take my word for it (and I speak from thorough knowledge), you will have a son-in-law who is all your fancy can paint, or your heart desire. It only remains to wish that he may right speedily present you with grand-sons who shall resemble their father. Happy the day when I shall receive from the arms of two such friends the children of one and grand-children of the other, even as if I were myself their father or grandsire, and hold them, as though by equal right, in my embrace! Farewell.

### XXVII

#### TO SEVERUS

You desire me to consider what turn you should give to your speech in honour of the Emperor, upon your being appointed consul. It is easy to find, but not easy to select, topics of encomium, for this

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

materia. Scribam tamen vel, quod malo, coram indicabo, si prius haesitationem meam ostendero.

Dubito, num idem tibi suadere quod mihi debeam. Designatus ego consul omni hac, etsi non adulatione, specie tamen adulationis abstinui non tamquam liber et constans, sed tamquam intellegens principis nostri, cuius videbam hanc esse praecipuam laudem, si nihil quasi ex necessitate decernerem. Recordabar etiam plurimos honores pessimo cuique delatos, a quibus hic optimus separari non alio magis poterat quam diversitate censendi; quod ipsum dissimulatione et silentio non praeterii, ne forte non iudicium illud meum, sed oblivio videretur.

Hoc tunc ego; sed non omnibus eadem placent, ne<sup>1</sup> conveniunt quidem. Praeterea faciendi aliquid vel non faciendi vera ratio cum hominum ipsorum tum rerum etiam ac temporum condicione mutatur. Nam recentia opera maximi principis praebent facultatem nova, magna, vera censendi. Quibus ex causis, ut supra scripsi, dubito, an idem nunc tibi quod tunc mihi suadeam. Illud non dubito, debuisse me in parte consilii tui ponere, quod ipse fecissem. Vale.

<sup>1</sup> ne *Gesner, K, nec codd.*



prince's virtues supply them in abundance. However, I will write, or (what I prefer) indicate my views to you in person, only I must first lay my grounds of hesitating before you.

I doubt whether I should advise you to do as I did on the same occasion.<sup>a</sup> When I was consul elect, I refrained from all that customary panegyric which, though not adulation, might yet bear the semblance of it. Not that I affected an intrepid freedom; but as well knowing the sentiments of our amiable prince, and that the highest praise I could offer to him would be to show the world I was under no necessity of paying him any. When I reflected what honours had been heaped upon the very worst of his predecessors, nothing, I imagined, could more distinguish a prince of his real virtues from those infamous Emperors, than to eulogise him in a different manner. And this point I did not omit or slur over in my speech, lest it might be suspected I passed over his glorious acts, not out of judgement, but forgetfulness.

Such was the method I then observed; but I am sensible the same measures are neither agreeable, nor indeed suitable to all alike. Besides, the propriety of doing or omitting a thing depends not only upon persons, but time and circumstances; and as the late actions of our illustrious Prince afford materials for panegyric, no less just than recent and magnificent, I doubt (as I said before) whether I should persuade you to act in this case as I did myself. In this, however, I am clear, that it was proper to offer to your consideration the plan I pursued. Farewell.

<sup>a</sup> See Bk. III. 13, 18.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

### XXVIII

C. PLINIUS PONTIO ALLIFANO <sup>1</sup> SUO S.

SCIO, quae tibi causa fuerit impedimento, quo minus praecurrere adventum meum in Campaniam posses. Sed, quamquam absens, totus huc migrasti; tantum mihi copiarum qua urbanarum qua rusticarum nomine tuo oblatum est, quas omnes improbe quidem, accepi tamen. Nam me <sup>2</sup> tui, ut ita facerem, rogabant, et verebar, ne et mihi et illis irascereris, si non fecissem. In posterum, nisi adhibueris <sup>3</sup> modum, ego adhibebo. Et iam tuis denuntiavi, si rursus tam multa attulissent, omnia relatueros. Dices oportere me tuis rebus ut meis uti. Etiam; sed perinde illis ac meis parco. Vale.

### XXIX

C. PLINIUS QUADRATO SUO S.

AVIDIUS QUIETUS, qui me unice dilexit et, quo non minus gaudeo, probavit, ut multa alia Thraseae (fuit enim familiaris) ita hoc saepe referebat, praecipere solitum suscipiendas esse causas aut amicorum aut destitutas aut ad exemplum pertinentes.

<sup>1</sup> ALLIFANO *add. Müller ut V. 14, VII. 4.*

<sup>2</sup> me *Dpra, Bipons, Müller, et M K.*

<sup>3</sup> adhibueris *Dpra, Bipons, Müller, adhibueritis M, K.*

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### XXVIII

#### TO PONTIUS ALLIFANUS

I AM not ignorant of the reason which prevented your coming into Campania to receive me. But absent as you were, might I have judged by the profusion of both town and country delicacies which were offered me in your name, I should have imagined you had conveyed yourself hither with your whole possessions. I must own I was so arrant a clown, as to take all that was offered me; however it was in compliance with the solicitations of your people, and fearing you would chide both them and me if I refused. But for the future, if *you* will not observe some measure, *I* must. And I have warned your domestics, if ever they serve me up such lavish meals again, they will take them away untouched. You will tell me that I ought to use what is yours as if it were mine. I am sensible of that; but I would be as sparing of your good things as I am of my own. Farewell.

### XXIX

#### TO QUADRATUS

AVIDIUS QUIETUS, whose affection, and (what I equally value) whose esteem I enjoyed in uncommon measure, used frequently to repeat this maxim, among others, of Thræsea's (whom he knew intimately)—“There are three sorts of causes which we ought to undertake; those of our friends, those of the deserted, and those which tend to form a

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Cur amicorum, non eget interpretatione ; cur destitutas ? quod in illis maxime et constantia agentis et humanitas cerneretur ; cur pertinentis <sup>1</sup> ad exemplum ? quia plurimum referret, bonum an malum induceretur. Ad haec ego genera causarum ambitiose fortasse, addam tamen claras et illustres. Aequum enim est agere non numquam gloriae et famae, id est, suam, causam.

Hos terminos, quia me consuluisti, dignitati ac verecundiae tuae statuo. Nec me praeterit usum et esse et haberi optimum dicendi magistrum ; video etiam multos parvo ingenio, litteris nullis, ut bene agerent, agendo consecutos. Sed et illud, quod vel Pollionis vel tamquam Pollionis accepi, verissimum experior : ‘Commode agendo factum est, ut saepe agerem, saepe agendo, ut minus commode’ ; quia scilicet adsiduitate nimia facilitas magis quam facultas nec fiducia, sed temeritas paratur. Nec vero Isocrati, quo minus haberetur summus orator, offecit, quod infirmitate vocis, mollitia frontis, ne in publico diceret, impediabatur.

Proinde multum lege, scribe, meditare, ut possis, cum voles, dicere ; dices, cum velle debebis. Hoc

<sup>1</sup> pertinentis *M D, Müller, pertinentes vulg.*

precedent." The reason we should engage in the cause of our friends requires no explanation ; we should assist the deserted, he said, because it shews a resolute and generous mind ; as we ought to rise in the cause where precedent is concerned, since it is of the last consequence whether a good or evil one be introduced. To which three sorts of pleas I will add (perhaps in the spirit of ambition, however, I will add) those of the splendid and illustrious kind. For it is reasonable sometimes to plead the cause of glory and fame, or in other words, *one's own*.

These are the limits (since you ask my sentiments) I would prescribe to a person of your dignity and moderation. I do not forget that practice is generally esteemed, and in truth is, the best teacher of eloquence. I have even seen many who with small genius and no erudition have made themselves good pleaders by merely pleading. Nevertheless, the observation of Pollio, or at least what passes for his, I have found by experience to be most true ; "A good address at the bar," said he, "brought me much practice ; and, on the other hand, much practice spoiled my address." The reason is, too constant application makes eloquence rather a trick than a talent, and gives a speaker not confidence but assurance. Accordingly we see that the bashfulness of Isocrates, which, together with the weakness of his voice, hindered his speaking in public, did not by any means obstruct his fame as a consummate orator.

Let me farther advise you, to read, write, and meditate much, that you may be able to speak whenever you are inclined ; you will only speak, I know, when your inclination coincides with duty. I

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

fere temperamentum ipse servavi ; non numquam necessitati, quae pars rationis est, parui. Egi enim quasdam a senatu iussus, quo tamen in numero fuerunt ex illa Thraseae divisione, hoc est, ad exemplum pertinentes.

Adfui Baeticis contra Baebium Massam. Quaesitum est, an danda esset inquisitio ; data est. Adfui rursus isdem querentibus de Caecilio Classico. Quaesitum est, an provinciales ut socios ministrosque proconsulis plecti oporteret ; poenas luerunt. Accusavi Marium Priscum, qui lege repetundarum damnatus utebatur clementia legis, cuius severitatem immanitate criminum excesserat ; relegatus est. Tuitus sum Iulium Bassum ut incustoditum nimis et incautum ita minime malum ; iudicibus acceptis in senatu remansit. Dixi proxime pro Vareno postulante, ut sibi invicem evocare testes liceret ; impetratum est. In posterum opto ut ea potissimum iubear, quae me deceat vel sponte fecisse. Vale.

myself have generally observed the latter rule; though I have at times yielded to necessity (which, however, is the same thing as obeying reason). For I have occasionally pleaded causes by order of the senate; but some of these came under one of Thrasea's classes, that is, they tended to set up a precedent.

I appeared for the provincials of Baetica against Baebius Massa<sup>a</sup> on the motion for bringing him to trial; the motion was carried. I pleaded for them a second time when they impeached Caecilius Classicus<sup>b</sup> on the question, whether the subordinate officers of a consul should be punished as his agents and accomplices; penalties were inflicted on the officers of Classicus. I was prosecuting counsel in the case of Marius Priscus,<sup>c</sup> who having been convicted under the law against extortion, sought to profit by the lenity of that statute, which provided no adequate penalty for his enormous guilt: but he was sentenced to banishment. I defended Julius Bassus<sup>d</sup> on the ground that he had acted indiscreetly and imprudently, but not in the least with any ill intention: the case was referred to commissioners, and he was permitted to retain his seat in the senate. I pleaded the other day on behalf of Varenus,<sup>e</sup> who petitioned for leave to examine witnesses on his part; which was granted him. As to the future, I wish I may have such causes enjoined me by authority, as it would become me to undertake even voluntarily. Farewell.

<sup>a</sup> vii. 33.<sup>b</sup> iii. 4, 9.<sup>c</sup> ii. 11.<sup>d</sup> iv. 9.<sup>e</sup> v. 20.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

### XXX

C. PLINIUS FABATO PROSOCERO SUO S.

DEBEMUS mehercule natales tuos perinde ac nostros celebrare, cum laetitia nostrorum ex tuis pendeat, cuius diligentia et cura hic hilares, istic securi sumus.

Villa Camilliana, quam in Campania possides, est quidem vetustate vexata; ea tamen,<sup>1</sup> quae sunt pretiosiora, aut integra manent aut levissime laesa sunt. Attendimus<sup>2</sup> ergo, ut quam saluberrime reficiantur.

Ego videor habere multos amicos, sed huius generis, cuius et tu quaeris et res exigit, prope neminem. Sunt enim omnes togati et urbani; rusticorum autem praediorum administratio poscit durum aliquem et agrestem, cui nec labor ille gravis nec cura sordida nec tristis solitudo videatur. Tu de Rufo honestissime cogitas; fuit enim filio tuo familiaris. Quid tamen nobis ibi praestare possit, ignoro, velle plurimum, scio. Vale.

### XXXI

C. PLINIUS CORNELIANO SUO S.

EVOCATUS in consilium a Caesare nostro ad Centum Cellas (hoc loco nomen) maximam<sup>3</sup> cepi voluptatem.

<sup>1</sup> ea tamen *a*, *K*, et tamen *Dpr*, tamen *M*.

<sup>2</sup> attendimus *M*(?) *a*, *Bip.*, attendemus *Dpr*, *K*.

<sup>3</sup> maximam *Dpr*, *Müller*, magnam *Ma*, *K*.



## BOOK VI. xxx.-xxxı

### XXX

#### TO FABATUS, HIS WIFE'S GRANDFATHER

I OUGHT, most certainly, to celebrate your birth-day as my own, since all the happiness of mine arises from yours, to whose care and diligence it is owing that I am cheerful in town and easy in the country.

Your Camillian villa <sup>a</sup> in Campania has indeed suffered by the injuries of time ; however, the most valuable parts of the building either remain entire, or are but slightly damaged, so I am seeing to their being thoroughly repaired.

I flatter myself I have many friends, yet scarce any, I doubt, of the sort you inquire after, and which the affair you mention demands. All mine are complete men about town ; whereas to manage a country estate requires a person of a rough cast and rustic breeding, who will not look upon the work as heavy, the office as mean, or the solitude as melancholy. Your thinking of Rufus does you honour, since he was your son's bosom-friend ; but how he can serve us yonder, I know not ; though I know he has all the will in the world to do so. Farewell.

### XXXI

#### TO CORNELIANUS

I RECEIVED lately the most exquisite entertainment imaginable at Centumcellae <sup>b</sup> (as it is called), whither our Emperor had summoned me to his privy council.

<sup>a</sup> So called, because it formerly belonged to Camillus.

<sup>b</sup> Now Civita Vecchia.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Quid enim iucundius quam principis iustitiam, gravitatem, comitatem in secessu quoque, ubi maxime recluduntur, inspicere? Fuerunt variae cognitiones, et quae virtutes iudicis per plures species experirentur. Dixit causam Claudius Ariston,<sup>1</sup> princeps Ephesiorum, homo munificus, et innoxie popularis. Inde invidia et ab dissimillimis delator immissus. Itaque absolutus vindicatusque est.

Sequenti die audita est Gallitta<sup>2</sup> adulterii rea. Nupta haec tribuno militum honores petitulo et suam et mariti dignitatem centurionis amore maculaverat. Maritus legato consulari, ille Caesari scripserat. Caesar excussis probationibus centurionem exauctoravit atque etiam relegavit. Supererat crimini, quod nisi duorum esse non poterat, reliqua pars ultionis; sed maritum non sine aliqua reprehensione patientiae amor uxoris retardabat, quam quidem etiam post delatum adulterium domi habuerat quasi contentus aemulum removisse. Admonitus, ut perageret accusationem, peregit invitus; sed illam damnari etiam invito accusatore necesse erat: damnata et Iuliae legis poenis relicta est. Caesar et nomen centurionis et commemorationem disciplinae militaris sententiae

<sup>1</sup> Ariston *Dra*, *Bip.*, *Müller*, Aristion *Mp*, *K.* ab *a*, *Bip.*, *Müller*, a *r*, *K*, om. *M*.

<sup>2</sup> Gallitta *Momms.*, Galitta *vulg.*

<sup>a</sup> i.e. (1) forfeiture of half her dower and one-third of her property, (2) banishment to an island.

Could anything indeed afford a higher pleasure than to see the sovereign exercising his justice, his wisdom, and his affability, and that in retirement, where they are laid most open to view? Various were the cases brought before him, which showed under several aspects the virtues of the judge. That of Claudius Ariston came on first. He is an Ephesian nobleman, of great munificence and unambitious popularity; having thus aroused the envy of persons his opposites in character, they had spirited up an informer against him; such being the facts, he was honourably acquitted.

The next day, Gallitta was tried on the charge of adultery. Her husband, a military tribune, was upon the point of standing for office, when she disgraced both him and herself by an intrigue with a centurion. The husband had written of this to the consul's legate, and he to the Emperor. Caesar, having well sifted the evidence, not only broke but banished the centurion. Still, justice was but half satisfied, for the crime is one in which two parties must necessarily be involved. But the husband drew back out of fondness for his wife, and was a good deal censured for complaisance; for even after her crime was detected he had kept her under his roof, content, it should seem, with having removed his rival. He was admonished to proceed in the suit, which he did with great reluctance: it was necessary, however, she should be condemned, even against the prosecutor's will. Condemned she was, and given up to the punishment directed by the Julian law.<sup>a</sup> The Emperor thought proper to specify, in his judgement, the name of the centurion, and to dwell upon the

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

adiecit, ne omnes eiusmodi causas revocare ad se videretur.

Tertio die inducta cognitio est multis sermonibus et vario rumore iactata Iulii Tironis codicilli, quos ex parte veros esse constabat, ex parte falsi dicebantur. Substituebantur crimini Sempronius Senecio, eques Romanus, et Eurythmus, Caesaris libertus et procurator. Heredes, cum Caesar esset in Dacia, communiter epistula scripta petierant, ut susciperet cognitionem; suscepit. Reversus diem dederat et cum ex heredibus quidam quasi reverentia Eurythmi omitterent accusationem, pulcherrime dixerat, 'Nec ille Polyclitus est nec ego Nero.' Indulserat tamen petentibus dilationem cuius tempore exacto considerat auditurus. A parte heredum intraverunt duo omnino: postularunt, ut aut<sup>1</sup> omnes heredes agere cogerentur, cum detulissent omnes, aut sibi quoque desistere permetteretur.

Locutus est Caesar summa gravitate, summa moderatione, cumque advocatus Senecionis et Eurythmi dixisset suspicionibus relinqui reos, nisi audirentur: 'Non curo,' inquit, 'an isti suspicionibus relinquuntur, ego relinquor.' Dein conversus ad nos: 'Ἐπιστήσατε quid facere debeamus; isti enim queri volunt,<sup>2</sup> quod sibi non licuerit accusare.<sup>3</sup>' Tum ex consilii sententia iussit denuntiari heredibus omnibus,

<sup>1</sup> ut aut *Müller*, ut *Dpa*, om. *M*, aut *K*.

<sup>2</sup> queri volunt *Dpra*, *Bipons*, *K*<sup>1</sup>, quaeri volunt *M*, quaeri nolunt *K*.

<sup>3</sup> quod sibi non licuerit acc. *Müller*, quod sibi lic. non acc. *codd.*, *vulg.*, qu. sibi non lic. non acc. *Gesner*, quod illis lic. non acc. *Kukula*.

claims of military discipline ; lest it should be supposed that he intended to try all similar causes himself.

The third day an inquiry was begun concerning the much-discussed will of Julius Tiro, part of which was plainly genuine, the other part, it was said, was forged. The persons brought under the charge were Sempronius Senecio, a Roman knight, and Eurythmus, Caesar's freedman and procurator. The heirs had written a joint letter to the Emperor when he was in Dacia, petitioning him to reserve the case for his own hearing. He did so, and upon his return appointed a day for the hearing ; and when some of the heirs, as if from respect to Eurythmus, would have withdrawn the suit, he nobly said, " He is not Polyclitus,<sup>a</sup> nor am I Nero." However, he complied with their request for an adjournment, and the time being expired, he now sat to hear the cause. Two only of the heirs appeared ; they requested that either all the heirs might be compelled to prosecute, as all had joined in the information, or that they also might have leave to desist.

Caesar spoke with great dignity and moderation ; and when the counsel for Senecio and Eurythmus said, that unless the defendants were heard, they would remain under suspicion, " I do not care," said the Emperor, " whether suspicion rests upon your clients ; it rests upon myself." Then, turning to us, " Advise me," said he, " what is my proper course, for you see they want to complain that they have not been allowed to prosecute." Then, by advice of the council, he ordered notice to be given to the heirs collectively, that they should either go on with

<sup>a</sup> A favourite freedman of Nero.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

aut agerent aut singuli approbarent causas non agendi; alioqui se vel de calumnia pronuntiaturum.

Vides, quam honesti, quam severi dies; quos iucundissimae remissiones sequebantur. Adhibebamur cotidie cenae: erat modica, si principem cogitares. Interdum ἀκροάματα audiebamus, interdum iucundissimis sermonibus nox ducebatur. Summo die abeuntibus nobis (tam diligens in Caesare humanitas) xenia sunt missa. Sed mihi ut gravitas cognitionum, consilii honor, suavis simplicitasque convictus ita locus ipse periucundus fuit.

Villa pulcherrima cingitur viridissimis agris, imminet litori; cuius in sinu fit cum maxime portus. Huius sinistrum brachium firmissimo opere munitum est; dextrum elaboratur. In ore portus insula adsurgit, quae illatum vento mare obiacens frangat tutumque ab utroque latere decursum navibus praestet, adsurgit autem arte visenda; ingentia saxa latissima navis provehit; contra, haec alia super alia deiecta ipso pondere manent ac sensim quodam velut aggere construuntur. Eminent iam et apparet saxeum dorsum impactosque fluctus in immensum elidit et tollit. Vastus illic fragor canumque circa mare. Saxis deinde pilae adicientur, quae procedente tempore

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<sup>a</sup> *calumnia* was the legal term for bringing a false or malicious charge against a person.

## BOOK VI. xxxi

the suit, or severally show cause for not doing so; otherwise that he would at least pronounce them guilty of calumny.<sup>a</sup>

Thus you see how honourably and seriously we spent our days, which however were followed by the most agreeable recreations. We were every day invited to Caesar's supper, which, for a prince, was a modest repast; there we were either entertained with interludes, or passed the night in the most pleasing conversation. On the last day he sent each of us presents at our departure, so unremitting is the benevolence of Caesar! As for myself, I was not only charmed with the dignity of the proceedings, the honour paid to the assessors, the ease and unreserved freedom of the conversation, but with the place itself.

Here is a villa, surrounded by the most verdant meadows, and overhanging a bay of the coast where they are at this moment constructing a harbour. The left-hand mole of this port is protected by immensely solid masonry; the right is now being completed. An island is rising in the mouth of the harbour, which will break the force of the waves when the wind blows shorewards, and afford passage to ships on either side. Its construction is highly worth seeing; huge stones are transported hither in a broad-bottomed vessel, and being sunk one upon the other, are fixed by their own weight, gradually accumulating in the manner, as it were, of a rampart. It already lifts its rocky back above the ocean, while the waves which beat upon it, being tossed to an immense height, roar prodigiously, and whiten all the sea round. To these stones are added wooden piles, which in time will give it the appearance of a

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

enatam insulam imitentur. Habebit hic portus et iam habet nomen auctoris eritque vel maxime salutaris. Nam per longissimum spatium litus importuosum hoc receptaculo utetur. Vale.

### XXXII

C. PLINIUS QUINTILIANO SUO S.

QUAMVIS et ipse sis continentissimus et filiam tuam ita institueris, ut decebat filiam tuam, Tutili neptem, cum tamen sit nuptura honestissimo viro, Nonio Celeri, cui ratio civilium officiorum necessitatem quandam nitoris imponit, debet secundum conditionem mariti veste, comitatu (quibus non quidem augetur dignitas, ornatur tamen) instrui. Te porro animo beatissimum, modicum facultatibus scio. Itaque partem oneris tui mihi vindico et tamquam parens alter puellae nostrae confero quinquaginta milia nummum plus collaturus, nisi a verecundia tua sola mediocritate munusculi impetrari posse confiderem, ne recusares. Vale.

### XXXIII

C. PLINIUS ROMANO SUO S.

‘TOLLITE cuncta, inquit, coeptosque, auferte labores.’

Seu scribis aliquid seu legis, tolli, auferri iube et accipe orationem meam ut illa arma divinam (num

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“ The speech of Vulcan to the Cyclopes, when he directs them to prepare arms for Aeneas. *Aeneid*, viii. 439. ”



## BOOK VI. xxxi.-xxxiii

natural island. This port will be, and already is, named after its great author, and will prove of infinite benefit, by affording a haven to ships on a long stretch of harbourless coast. Farewell.

### XXXII

#### TO QUINTILIAN

THOUGH your own tastes are of the simplest, and you have brought up your daughter as befits a child of yours and a grand-child of Tutilius ; yet as she is about to marry so distinguished a person as Nonius Celer, whose official station requires a certain display, she must be provided with cloaths and attendance (things which embellish worth, though they do not augment it) suitable to her husband's rank. Now, as I am sensible your material wealth is not equal to the riches of your mind, I claim to myself a part of your expense, and like another father, endow our young lady with fifty thousand sesterces. My contribution should be larger, but that I am well persuaded the smallness of the gift is the only inducement that can prevail with your modesty not to refuse it. Farewell.

### XXXIII

#### TO ROMANUS

“ ‘ HENCE with the rest,’ quoth he, ‘ and throw aside  
Your tasks begun—’ ”<sup>a</sup>

Whether you are engaged in reading or writing, cry “ Hence ” and “ Away ” to your book or papers, and take up my oration, which, like those arms in the poem, is divine. Nothing, I think, could outdo

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

superbuis potui ? ) re vera, ut inter meas pulchram ; nam mihi satis est certare mecum.

Est haec pro Attia Variola et dignitate personae et exempli raritate et iudicii magnitudine insignis. Nam femina splendide nata, nupta praetorio viro, exheredata ab octogenario patre intra undecim dies quam ille novercam ei<sup>1</sup> amore captus induxerat, quadruplici iudicio bona paterna repetebat. Sedebant iudices centum et octoginta (tot enim quatuor consiliis colliguntur),<sup>2</sup> ingens utrimque advocatio et numerosa subsellia, praeterea densa circumstantium corona latissimum iudicium multiplici circulo ambibat. Ad hoc stipatum tribunal, atque etiam ex superiore basilicae parte qua feminae qua viri et audiendi, quod difficile, et, quod facile, visendi studio imminebant. Magna exspectatio patrum, magna filiarum, magna etiam novercarum. Secutus est varius eventus. Nam duobus consiliis vicinus, totidem victi sumus. Notabilis prorsus res et mira eadem in causa, isdem iudicibus, isdem advocatis, eodem tempore tanta diversitas accidit, casu, quod non casus videretur. Victa est noverca ipsa heres ex parte sexta, victus Suberinus, qui exheredatus a patre singulari impudentia alieni patris bona vindicabat non ausus sui petere.

<sup>1</sup> ille novercam ei *Dpra*, Müller, ille novercam, *M*, *K*.

<sup>2</sup> colliguntur *Mr*, *Bipons*, *K*, conscribuntur *Dp*, *Catan.*, Müller.

<sup>a</sup> See p. 10, note.

<sup>b</sup> Presumably the son, by a former marriage, of Accia's step-mother.

the arrogance of this remark ! But in good earnest, take this speech into your hands as one of my best ; for I am content to vie only with myself.

'Tis my plea on behalf of Accia Variola, noteworthy from the high rank of the person concerned, the rarity of such a case in litigation, and the amplitude of the tribunal. For here was a high-born lady, wife to a man of Praetorian rank, suing for her patrimony in the Centumviral Court<sup>a</sup> ; having been disinherited by a father aged eighty, within eleven days after the enamoured ancient had brought home a step-mother to his daughter. The Court was composed of one hundred and eighty jurors (for that is the number of which its four panels consist) ; a host of advocates appeared on both sides ; the benches were infinitely thronged, and the spacious court was encompassed by a circle of people standing several rows deep. In addition, the tribunal was crowded, and the very galleries lined with men and women, hanging over in their eagerness to hear (which was difficult) and see (which was easy). Fathers, daughters, and step-mothers too, anxiously awaited the verdicts. These were divergent, two of the panels being for us, and two against us. It is something remarkable and strange, that the same cause debated before the same jury, and pleaded by the same advocates, and at the same time, should meet with such contrary judgements—by an accident, which seemed not accidental. The step-mother, who took under the will a sixth part of the inheritance, lost her cause. So did Suberinus,<sup>b</sup> who though he was disinherited by his father without daring to sue for his own patrimony, had yet the singular effrontery to claim that of another.

## THE LETTERS OF PLINY

Haec tibi exposui, primum ut ex epistula scires quae ex oratione non poteras, deinde (nam detegam artes) ut orationem libentius legeres, si non legere tibi, sed interesse iudicio videreris; quam, sit licet magna, non despero gratiam brevissimae impenetraturam. Nam et copia rerum et arguta divisione et narratiunculis pluribus et eloquendi varietate renovatur. Sunt multa (non auderem nisi tibi dicere) elata, multa pugnacia, multa subtilia. Intervenit enim acribus illis et erectis frequens necessitas computandi ac paene calculos tabulamque poscendi, ut repente in privati iudicii formam centumvirale vertatur. Dedimus vela indignationi, dedimus irae, dedimus dolori et in amplissima causa quasi magno mari pluribus ventis sumus vecti.

In summa solent quidam ex contubernalibus nostris existimare hanc orationem (iterum dicam) ut inter meas ὡς ὑπὲρ Κτησιφῶντος esse; an vere, tu facillime iudicabis, qui tam memoriter tenes omnes, ut conferre cum hac, dum hanc solam legis, possis. Vale.

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<sup>a</sup> An oration of Demosthenes in defence of Ctesiphon, esteemed the best of that noble orator's speeches. . . . Sidonius Apollinaris says that Pliny acquired more honour by this speech than even by his incomparable panegyric upon Trajan. (Melm.)

## BOOK VI. xxxiii

I have given you these details, firstly that you might learn from my letter what you could not from my speech ; secondly (for I will lay bare the artifice) that you might read my speech more willingly by fancying yourself not a reader, but a spectator of the trial. Long it may be, but I do not despair of its gaining the same favour with you as the briefest possible oration. For abundance of matter, skilful division of topics, a profusion of anecdote and variety of style combine to give it freshness. I will even venture to say to you (what I durst not to any one else) that a spirit of great fire and sublimity breaks out in many parts of it, at the same time that in others it is wrought up with much delicacy and closeness of reasoning. I was frequently obliged to intermix dry computations with these elevated and vigorous passages, and to descend from the orator almost to the accountant ; so that you will sometimes imagine the scene was changed from the solemnity of the centumviral tribunal, to that of a private and inferior one. I gave a loose to indignation, resentment, and sorrow, and steering through the broad sea of this illustrious cause, was governed by turns with every varying gust of the passions.

In a word, some of our circle look upon this speech (and I will venture to repeat it again) as the *Ctesiphon*<sup>a</sup> of my orations ; whether with reason or not, you will easily judge, who have them all so perfectly in your memory, as to be able while you are reading this to compare it with the rest, without referring to them. Farewell.

# THE LETTERS OF PLINY

## XXXIV

C. PLINIUS MAXIMO SUO S.

RECTE fecisti, quod gladiatorium <sup>1</sup> munus Veronensibus nostris promisisti, a quibus olim amaris, suspiceris, ornaris. Inde etiam uxorem carissimam tibi et probatissimam habuisti, cuius memoriae aut opus aliquod aut spectaculum atque hoc potissimum quod maxime funeri debebatur. Praeterea tanto consensu rogabaris, ut negare non constans, sed durum videretur. Illud quoque egregie, quod tam facilis, tam liberalis in edendo fuisti. Nam per haec etiam magnus animus ostenditur. Vellem Africanæ, quas coëmeras plurimas, ad praefinitum diem occurrissent. Sed, licet cessaverint illae tempestate detentæ, tu tamen meruisti, ut acceptum tibi fieret, quod quo minus exhiberes, non per te stetit. Vale.

<sup>1</sup> gladiatorium *Dpr*, *Bipons*, gladiatorum *Ma*, *K*.

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## BOOK VI. xxxiv

### XXXIV

#### TO MAXIMUS

You did extremely right to promise a combat of gladiators to our good friends the citizens of Verona, not only since you have long enjoyed from them regard, veneration, and marks of honour, but as it was from thence also you received your most tenderly beloved and excellent wife. And since you owed some monument or public show to her memory, what other spectacle could you have exhibited more proper to a funereal occasion? Besides, you were so unanimously pressed to do so, that to have refused would have had the appearance rather of obstinacy than resolution. The readiness with which you granted this request, and the magnificent manner in which you performed it, is also much to your honour; for a greatness of soul is seen in these smaller instances, as well as in matters of higher moment. I am sorry the African Panthers, which you had largely purchased for this occasion, did not arrive time enough; but though they were delayed by the tempestuous season, the obligation to you is equally the same, since it was not your fault that they were not exhibited. Farewell.